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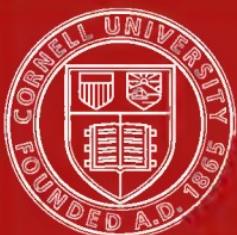
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# PRORSUS RETRORSUS.

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BY

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DENTON J. SNIDER.

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ST. LOUIS:  
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Polydore and Aurora.

*Præludium Matutinum.*

Weary, unwilling, the eyelids droop, though  
slumber has left them ;  
Polydore rises alone, sits on his couch with a  
sigh ;  
Long he has wandered in hope, pursuing a vision  
of splendor,  
Filled is his heart with a dream, whether he  
wake or he sleep.  
Soon he sets forth in the dark for the hills, for  
the tops of the mountains,  
Toil, which wearies the world, brings him his  
only repose.  
Troubled he is with an image, sweet image that  
drives him to wander,  
Polydore is not too old, is not too young for  
the quest.

Up the rough pathway he climbs, which leads him  
away from his cabin,  
Down he hastens to the dell, through the wild  
gloom of the glen,  
Forward he steps full-hearted, his lot is ever to  
wander,  
Polydore's locks are still brown, shot through  
with silvery strands.  
Dawn is dreamily touching the farthest tops of  
the mountains,  
Which, not fully awake, drowsily rise from the  
earth  
In the distance; like giants they rise and shake  
off their slumber,  
With a dull droop of the head vanishing into  
mists  
For a moment, but at a wink they spring back to  
twilight:  
Polydore, young in his dreams, walks out of  
darkness to dawn.  
Longing in minstrelsy sweet, and lingering over  
his journey,  
He will hum a low note tuned to a shell in his  
hand;  
Images swarm on his path to the heights and  
mock all his senses,  
List! his voice too they touch, tipping his  
words with their wings:

“ Lovely Aurora ! I see thee arise from thy bed  
in the Orient,  
With the stroke of thy hand moving the curtain aside ;  
White and slender thy fingers are laid on that curtain nocturnal,  
Hanging down from the skies, faintly ingrained with light ;  
Through the break that hath cloven the night, I gain sweetest glimpses  
Of a maiden that stirs, clad in the white robe of rest,  
On a bed that is made of the snow-flake or down of the eider,  
And is rocked to a hymn sung by the winds of the hills.  
But now while I am peering with curious eye to behold thee,  
Out with a bound thou art sprung, maiden of mildness and grace,  
And in thy soft-flowing garment thou sweepest across the high Heavens,  
Robed in the drapery fair of the Immortals of old.  
Goddess thou art, I adore thee, I know thy shape and thy movement,  
Now appearing to me, mortal yet dear to thy glance.  
Pour in my wandering soul a nectarean drop of thy beauty,

As thou revealest thyself yonder amid the mad  
stars  
Throwing their torches unnumbered into thy  
calm mellow lustre,  
Till they, lost in thy train, seem to have shot  
from the sky.  
Up the horizon thou movest a queen, in silence  
majestic,  
No one heareth thy step ere thy sweet presence  
be felt;  
Where thou passest is light, but not the fierce  
glare of Apollo,  
Mild is thy lustre as love that is unknown to  
itself."

Polydore stopped for a breath, how strong and  
swift were his heart-beats,  
Forging the thought of his soul into the  
musical word!  
Soon he felt lonely, he could not endure his own  
company voiceless,  
For to another he sang, could he but sing to  
himself.  
Deeply he sighed for what was behind, but he  
ever looked forward;  
Strange how future and past mingled their  
strains in his song!  
Was it Aurora he saw, or was it the thought of  
another

Who had slipped into her shape, as he addressed  
her on high?

“ Oh how youthful thy glance as coyly thou  
climbest the Heavens!

Blushes start in thy cheek, roses are wound in  
thy hair,

Innocence moves in thy light, yet tinged with a  
red ray of passion;

Maiden divinely young, thine is the gift of the  
Gods.

When horrid Night has long blinded the Hours  
beneath her dark mantle,

On thy lover thou look’st, then all at once  
there is light;

Every morning for him thou hast the fresh face  
of the flowers,

Dipped in Castalian dew, breathing Elysian  
perfume;

And from thine eyes there flows through the  
world a shy subtle radiance:

’Tis the love in thy look, deepest and first of  
the heart.

Thine is that first love, breaking its way out the  
soul to the senses,

With the might of the God, who in the heart  
builds a shrine

All to himself, and thence he divinely doth pour  
out his splendors,

Newly begetting the man, newly creating the world.

First love knoweth the mortal but once, while thine is forever,

Born each morning anew for the dear spouse at thy side ;

O, the hard law for us of the wretched race of Terrestrials,

Draughts repeated though sweet, lose of their flavor divine;

Once, only once can be felt the delicious surprise of the senses,

Once the rapture of soul, when we know not what we do.”

In the swoon of his feeling pale Polydore sank into silence,

Back he looked on his path; has he left something behind?

Softly his glances were flushed with the rays of a fond recognition,

See, on the gloom of the night flashes the hope of the Dawn.

O Polydorus, art thou, mad imortal, now wooing a Goddess?

Hush, his voice has come back, as he looks into the East:

“ Say, for whom is this love of the maid, the whole world overflowing,

Every new morn in a bliss kindled down under  
the sea?  
For Tithonus, happy Tithonus, old man and a  
mortal;  
Him caresses the maid daily abloom in her  
youth,  
Where he lies on his couch far beyond the round  
rim of the ocean,  
Till Aurora in fright upward unwillingly  
springs,  
Roused by the rumble and roar far away, on the  
breath of the darkness  
Borne to her bed of repose, startling ambrosial  
hours.  
Hark! 'tis the whirl of the wheels, and the stamp  
of the steeds of Apollo,  
In a chariot of flames bringing the bold-eyed  
day.  
'Hasten, Aurora, announce with thy torch his  
coming to mortals,  
Circle the globe with thy wings, night shall  
restore thee to love.  
Here I await thy return o'er the sea in soft fleeces  
of slumber;  
Rouse up the work of the world, heralding  
light and its task;  
Round the whole earth thou must pass, my em-  
brace must be earned by thy journey,  
Parted we are for a day, won by thy duty is  
love.'

Up she leaps from the couch, and glances afar to  
the westward,  
Into the darkness she peers, that lies out-  
stretched on the globe  
Like a dragon ; then lifting the train of her robe  
of pure twilight,  
Softly she treads on the hills, steps from a top  
to a top,  
Till she hath filled the whole arch of the sky to  
the bending horizon  
With her Olympian folds waving soft silence of  
light ;  
As if a statue might suddenly rise from a mount-  
ain of marble  
Into the welkin above, there to be seen as a  
God.  
Forth she is ready to fly, but turns in the pang of  
departure,  
Gives a last look at her love, yet with a hope  
on her face ;  
Many complaints she sighs on the night wind  
about separation,  
She embraces those limbs furrowed and trem-  
bling with age,  
And she strokes with her delicate hand the white  
locks of Tithonus,  
Kissing to smoothness his brow broken in ridges  
by time.  
Is it true that Love can be kindled by snows of  
the winter ?

Seeks it to slake its fierce thirst at the cool  
fountain of age?  
Gentle tears fill her eyes during all of the hours  
of absence,  
Weep a soft dew on the earth till every flower's  
deep heart,  
Touched with a sisterly grief, is filled with a drop  
of pure sorrow;  
Heaven's star-lit dome loses itself in her  
glance,  
Constellations swoon out of their place at the  
touch of her finger,  
And in her light-flowing veil sapphires she  
culls from the skies.  
Yet, Aurora, yet never wert thou by the day  
overtaken,  
Far in advance of each sun is thy fleet flight  
from embrace,  
Time thou hast left in the race, thou outsteppest  
the steeds of Apollo,  
Who from his ear overhead smites us to age  
with his beams.  
But, O lily-crowned victress, immortal thou art  
and a Goddess,  
Youth sits throned in thy cheek, scattering  
blossoms eterne.  
In the evening thou bathest thy waist in the  
springs of the Ocean,  
Then every morn at this hour thou art arisen  
new-born."

Polydore ceased; he sat down on a stone, the  
first stone of a temple,  
Smote with his staff in the soil, out of the  
ground peeped a face,  
That had been hewn in the ages antique by the  
hand of a sculptor,  
Formed to a love in his heart out of the Parian  
block.  
Long it had lain in the earth, its body immortal  
with beauty,  
Slept the long sleep of its night veiled from  
the look of the world,  
Till now Polydore wandering happens along on  
his journey,  
Strikes but a blow with his staff, gone is the  
magical spell,  
Out of the grave uprises a Goddess to glad  
resurrection,  
Still with the smile of her youth brought  
down from Hellas of old.  
What, thou too on the earth! and takest thy  
shape in my presence!  
Polydore rose in his joy, stood on the stone of  
the fane,  
Lofty Aurora appeared to his vision transfigured  
to marble  
Out of the twilight afar falling in refluent  
folds.  
But when again he looked at the sky, the face of  
the morning

Told of a change, a decay, plaintively tuning  
his words:

“ Goddess ! thy lover Tithonus is not only old,  
but a mortal,

Older he grows each day, burnt is his flesh by  
the suns

Till it is crisp to the touch, and soon must drop  
down into ashes,

When by endowment divine there will be left  
him his voice.

Once he too was a youth along the green banks  
of Scamander,

Fairest of shepherds he grew, piping on Idæan  
heights ;

’Mid the daughters of swains he passed a sunny  
existence,

With them leading the dance over the emerald  
slopes,

Haunting meadows and streams sweet nymphs  
ever wooed him,

All their love was in vain ’gainst the high rival  
who came,

For it was thou. As thy light-stepping chorus  
sped over the hill-tops

Once long ago in a laugh to the Dardanian  
vale,

Thou beheldest him first, and thereafter ahead of  
the morning,

Softly on tiptoe thou cam'st out of the East  
with a blush,  
Thou didst slip up behind and peer over the  
high top of Ida,  
Gaze on the shepherd asleep down in the valley  
below;  
Rapt in a dream of thy love mid his dew-laden  
herd he was lying,  
There thou didst join thy white arms round  
the fresh loins of the youth,  
Daintily lift him and lap him in slumberous folds  
of thy twilight,  
Bear him away round the world over Oceanus'  
streams.  
Thither ye fled, ye lovers antique, and dwelt in  
your rapture,  
Which, O Goddess, still gleams into the world  
from thy face,  
But the years the mortal pursued and plowed up  
his forehead,  
Wisdom's harvest they sowed, but with the  
tares of Old Age.  
Pale grew the cheek of Tithonus, and the light  
curl on his temples,  
Bitterly frosted all through, like a lone icicle  
hung.  
Weak is Old Age, but he creeps on the frolic-  
some days of the youthful,  
While in the garden they sport mid the red  
roses of life,

Fair Tithonus grew old, yet he had a young love  
in his bosom,  
Which immortal will be when the frail body is  
dropped ;  
And he still has a voice outpouring the notes of  
new music,  
Hymning a passionate strain to his Aurora the  
fair ;  
Song holds the essence immortal of love, where-  
in all its fervor  
Out of the heart is expressed into the heart by  
the word.  
'Tis his voice that she loves, to his voice her soul  
is still clinging,  
Though the rose leaf hath dropped out of his  
cheek to the ground ;  
Voice immortal to youth immortal in them is  
wedded,  
Like has found like in its love, Homer has  
married his Muse.  
For the voice of Tithonus still sings with the  
warmth of a lover,  
And sweet accents of song fall from his  
bodiless lips,  
Like the low tender whispers of Zephyrus,  
wooer of evening,  
Breaths that stray on the air, melting to  
musical sighs.  
Age, while it calms with its wisdom, has filled up  
the deeps of the passion,

Shallow the vessel that seethes wild at one  
touch of the flame.  
Still a young shepherd he is, and sings a fresh  
song to the maiden,  
Voice untouched by decay changes old years  
into new.  
Poet Tithonus, old man and a mortal," cried  
Polydorus,  
“ Youth, a Goddess, each night breathes golden  
dreams on thine eyes,  
And each morn to her task she springs from thy  
couch with caresses,  
Weaving the kiss of her lips into the word of  
thy soul.  
Thou dost speak at the touch of thy passion, that  
speech sings forever,  
Sings in the soul of the maid which she rays  
out of her looks,  
As she now meets me and passes in haste to  
return to her lover,  
There to drink the full song which I hear  
lisped in her train.  
Old man, thine is the gift of the Gods, their best  
gift to mortals,  
Word that never grows old, treasured in maid-  
only heart,  
Voice that ever is fresh in the dews of a morning  
eternal,

Thine is the gift of the Gods — share me thy  
heavenly gift,  
Share me the love of Aurora, the beautiful,  
youthful forever,  
Thou art a mortal, art dead — pity me here  
still alive,  
Me a mortal like thee, still chasing the hope and  
the passion,  
Share me thy gift of the Gods,— share me the  
youth of the world  
Which though linked to thy body of death, is  
wooed by us living,  
Share me the beautiful one ” — Polydore  
looked, she was gone;  
Garish Day had driven her off with a bold stare  
of sunlight,  
As on the summits above Phœbus was mount-  
ing his car,  
She had fled out of sight, the lone minstrel was  
left in the valley,  
With a dream in his heart nourishing pas-  
sionate strains;  
Still the fair vision was humming all day in his  
thoughts as he wandered,  
Tuning to music their dance as they would  
leap into words,  
Like the youths of the chorus who print a melod-  
ious movement

Clear on Parnassian air, winding about on the slopes.  
But she had fled from him, hastening forth to the couch of Tithonus,  
Ghostly old man of the East, long ago bodily dead,  
But who is wedded to youthful Aurora, the fair, the immortal :  
Polydore, hope for the maid, she will to-morrow return,  
Thou must catch her spirit's still shadow the moment it passes,  
Fix it forever in lines drawn round her fugitive form ;  
Look again at her statue that once stood up in this temple,  
Mark how swift is her flight, though in eternal repose.  
Fleet Aurora will yield up her speed to the hand of a mortal,  
But an Olympian net over her shape he must cast,  
As the form of fair Aphrodite was caught by the Artist,  
Holding her helplessly fast in his invisible toils ;  
For not even a Goddess can break out the net of her bondage,

If she once has been seized, prisoned in beautiful lines.

Haste, Polydorus, speed thy way to the lands of Aurora,

Over the rim of the sea into the home of the Past,

Go, now bring her thy living love, as once did Tithonus,

Go, take captive her form, then she forever is thine.



PART FIRST.

---

*Ecce Roma.*



## Book first.

### In Urbem.

---

#### I. Ultimus Romanorum.

What can it be in that face which couples so  
Great and so Little —

Often I ask of myself moving amid Roman  
crowds.

Many a look that flits through the streets has the  
shadowy semblance

Of a something divine which was alive long  
ago.

Many a form is an echo like that of a dim distant  
trumpet

Heralding glories past sunk in the flesh of to-  
day.

List the lament on the air from a swift spectral  
face that I followed  
Through the noise of the crowd, out of the  
market to church,  
Over the Tiber and up to the Pincio, eluding me  
always  
Till the Pantheon's spell both of us held face  
to face :  
“ Seek me no further, stop ! on this spot I yield  
up my secret  
Which for centuries long I have been bearing  
in pain ;  
Here is the fane where anciently mingled the  
Gods and the Heroes,  
Built in the form of the world holding within  
it the world.  
See ! it surrounds thy gaze like the high everlast-  
ing horizon,  
Arches itself to a dome bearing thee up to the  
skies.  
Everywhere it is telling of greatness — of Great  
Men who dwelt here,  
And are dwelling here still — hark to the voice  
on these walls.  
Deem it not fancy — oft now in Rome thou wilt  
see an old Hero,  
Or it may be a God, clad in the shapes of the  
low ;  
He has returned once more to the Earth to serve  
out his penance,

For the sin of his deed which he had wrought  
here before ;  
Still he could not avoid the burden and pang of  
the action ;  
Destiny forced him to do, driving him forward  
to pain.  
Ah, the price of the Great Deed is guilt, and  
guilty the Hero  
Pays the price of his act in the fierce torment  
of flesh.”  
Suddenly over his face rolled a wave from the  
ocean of sadness  
Which he bore in his breast ; all of his frame  
was a storm  
Only a moment ; strong like a Roman, he put  
down his heart-throbs,  
When again he began sternly his soul to con-  
fess :  
“ Out with the word — to be great in this world  
doth mean to be guilty,  
Suffering follows from guilt, as the red light-  
ning of law.  
Mark him — the Great Man never is happy,  
never offenseless,  
His endowment is Will dripping with innocent  
blood,  
Will is always the smiter, assailing some right of  
existence,  
Justice then comes with her doom, weaponed  
with penalty dire.

Hercules, paradised now in thy legends, Olympian Hero,

Stalwart thine arm was indeed, burdens to heap on thy back;

What did it boot thee in toil to have cleared the wild earth of its monsters?

Each great action of thine was a whole worldful of pain.

O Bellerophon! thou for thy country and race wert the slayer

Of the death-breathing fiend that from the Orient sprang;

Speak the reward of thy action? Madness — within thy torn bosom

Nemesis turned loose the fiends which in the fight thou hadst slain.

And the mightiest one of you all, O Julius Cæsar,  
Who didst snatch the old world out of its funeral pyre,

Where it was burning to ashes, and bowl it down into the present,

Who with thy conquest didst build far in the North the great dyke,

Bulwark of might and of light set against the barbarous deluge —

What was thy meed but thy death followed by taunts of all Time?

Once I saw thee standing just here, the soul of this temple,

And the world seemed too small holding the  
arch of thy brow,  
Daily the Sun would peep through the eye of  
this lofty Panthéon  
Thee once more to behold, greatest of all he  
had seen.”  
Slowly the spirit looked up to the radiant dome  
of the temple,  
Whence the light seemed to fall down from the  
eye of the God ;  
Placing himself in the sheen, he was lit through  
and through with the sunfire,  
Out of the flames he yet spoke, dropping his  
head with a sigh :  
“ Still the Hero after his deed must lapse into  
lowness,  
Thousands of years he endures ere he is  
cleansed of his wrong,  
Suffering is his red badge, alas ! the great action  
is guilty,  
He probation must pass smitten for ages with  
pangs,  
Till his spirit is purged of its guilt and Nemesis  
sated,  
Then a Hero again he may appear on the  
earth.”  
“ Who art thou, specter,” I cried, “ how speed-  
ing through time to this moment !  
How escaping that law which even Rome could  
not break ! ”

But he pointed his set ghostly finger to pedestals  
empty

Where the Great Men of Rome anciently stood  
with the Gods:

“ Ah, to be great! it is to be guilty — it is to be  
wretched,

Though the Hero be borne to the Olympus of  
Fame.”

More he seemed willing to speak when fell a  
moment of silence,

Lips he moved in the sheen, but not a sound  
could be heard ;

Like a glimmer he flashed up into the sky of the  
temple,

Lost in the pour of the beams falling down out  
of the sun,

With the God he rose on the sheen to the top of  
Pantheon,

Still I peered in the light, but he had vanished  
beyond.

Insuppressible sorrow steals o'er me, it crushes  
me downward,

All the Fates of hoar Time break in at once  
to my heart,

Pain strikes every sense of the body, poignant  
with pity

For the Heroes of old, guilty in deeds that  
were great.

This is the price of thy action, O Roman —  
penalty lasting

Laid by the world upon *thee* doing the work  
of the world;  
Still thou didst not shrink from thy task, from  
the guilt of thy grandeur,  
Sad as sorrow itself, sadder it is than the  
grave.  
Tears flow down the hard stones at the tragedy  
born of existence,  
Ever the man has to do that which undoes him  
at last.  
Even to live is a deed which has in the end to be  
paid for,  
Birth is but an old debt which must be  
canceled by death.  
Slowly I droop on a column, I am but a drop of  
pure pity,  
In this presence is man only the fall of a tear;  
For a moment I swoon, then faintly I rise from  
my heart-ache,  
Out the Pantheon I grope into the sunshine of  
Rome.  
Mount, O Phœbus, thy car, and fling thy light  
from the Heavens,  
Still to-day there is joy if but to Nature we  
turn;  
Still to-day there is life, see it here festooning  
these ruins,  
Green is even decay; up, let us pluck the new  
flower.

2. *Roma Carissima.*

“ Tell me why do you daily run off to ancient  
museums,  
Or to some temple, of which merely a column  
now stands?  
Yesterday why did you gaze so long at the pillar  
of Trajan?  
Just as two men might converse both of you  
stood face to face.  
All my life I have seeu it without ever hearing its  
language ;  
There I brushed you and passed, but you would  
never take note.  
What do you see in all these marble relics and  
ruins?  
Is a Goddess of stone sweeter than woman with  
life?  
Let me go with you to-day and look with your  
look at the statues,  
As they rise in long rows held upon pedestals  
high ;  
I would see what you see and know what you  
know in this city,  
Surely some secret there is which you have  
kept from my heart.”—  
So spake the maiden of Rome just when in the  
morning I started  
To the task of the day, searching for treasures  
antique,

Which have still to be dug from the ages by  
every new-comer :

'Twas not the first time she showed jealousy  
of the old Gods.

What could I answer but " Come, you shall enter  
the magical circle

That you may see what I see, that I may hear  
what you say ! "

Rapidly then we went down the street and over  
the Tiber,

Past the high palaces' pomp, through the hoar  
ruins of Rome ;

All the city rose up from the earth and became  
but one temple,

That was the temple of Time which he had  
built for himself.

Soon we came to a forest of columns that led to  
an entrance,

Where we entered great walls filled with an old  
sculptured world.

Zeus we saw, the ruler of Gods, but the father  
of mortals,

Parent ever below, sovereign ever above ;

Well might we blench at the thunder-bolt's glare  
that leaped from his forehead,

Still underneath we felt love softening lines in  
his lips.

Juno was there, and proved in her look she was  
queen of the Heavens,

For no mortal man ever to love her would dare;  
King Apollo was striding in stone to the slaughter of darkness,  
Swift as the gleam of the Sun, fixed though he stood on his feet;  
Venus was also present in many a posture alluring,  
As the Goddess of Love she had a room to herself;  
Vast was the throng of the deities coming from Earth and Olympus,  
Ocean, River and Nymph, down to the goat-footed Faun,  
Everlasting assembly of Gods transfigured to marble,  
As they gathered once, called by the voice of the bard,  
When they all were summoned up to the Olympian palace,  
There to take sides in the war over the city of Troy.  
Many high mortals also belonged to the sacred assembly,  
Who have done here below nobly the deeds of the Gods,  
Or who have suffered for others with a divinity's patience,  
Who have resisted fierce Fate though they have sunk in the fight.

See ! great Hercules yonder reclines — he is  
legless and headless,  
Still in his trunk you behold human becoming  
divine ;  
Ariadne forsaken has fallen asleep in her sorrow,  
But her dream has restored sweetly the lover  
she lost ;  
Pericles grandly is here, still speaking for war in  
his helmet,  
Man of the people he is, for he is man of the  
Gods ;  
And beside him through all the centuries lingers  
Aspasia,  
They still together remain, still they shall love  
in these halls.  
Zeus Laocoön with his fair children is linked in  
the serpent,  
Which has caught him like Fate with all his  
beautiful world,  
And great throes of despair that burst from the  
pain of the marble  
Herald the doom of the time, tragic are also  
the Gods ;  
Scarce can I keep back the sigh at the death of  
the beautiful ages,  
Petrified life of the world, still it is living in  
stone.  
Silent passes the maiden through long white lines  
of fair idols,

Looking with joy on the shapes, yet too afraid  
of her joy;

Wearied with vision at last, she began to speak  
. of the Gods there,

Standing in presence of Zeus who from his  
bust gave the nod:

“ Oft I have heard they once were alive in a  
world of their glory;

In old times they could talk, when they were  
worshiped as Gods.

Here in Rome they had altars and shrines, were  
entreated in prayer,

Though they be now of rock; heathen was  
then all the land.

Blessings they sent by day and by night, in  
peace and in warfare;

Then they ruled the whole world, they were  
the Kings of the Kings.

But there came a great war — the Gods fought —  
and in it were beaten;

When they were thrown out the sky, fell they  
a stone to the earth.”

Then she touched the cold marble just with the  
tip of her finger,

But withdrew it at once when she had felt  
the dead chill.

“ Oh these people of stone, how cold in falling  
from Heaven !

And how broken too, in the great depth of  
their fall !

Still they are found in our soil, when we plow up  
the sites of old cities,  
And, when we dig anywhere, they will turn  
out of the earth;  
Often they rise without heads, though the body  
remains undecaying,  
Think, they once were alive, walked in the  
streets of the town,  
With a man they would speak on the highway,  
or in the forest,  
And they would help him perchance, if he but  
knew how to pray.”  
There she stopped for a moment as if to gather  
her power  
Boldly to utter the word which had come up  
in her heart:  
“ Nay, these Gods and Goddesses loved, they  
loved men and women,  
Who, though mortal, were fair, fair to the  
vision above;  
Hot beat the hearts of the Gods in the joy of the  
love that was human,  
Had they been less of the man, they had not  
been the whole God.  
Theirs was the passion divine whose law is  
sweetly fulfillment,  
Then were divinity’s sons born of the mothers  
of earth.  
So Rhea Silvia once gave birth to Romulus,  
Remus,

Their high father was Mars, she was the mother of Rome.

Still to-day we fondly go back to her story aforetime,

Greatest of mothers she is, bearing the mightiest child.

Oh the old ages when Gods were sporting in river and fountain !

They would enter the home, give to good people their gifts;

Now they have to be dug from the ground, from the field of their warfare,

Gathered into this hall, whence they can never escape,

For they are prisoners banned into stone by the Pope in his castle,

He will not pardon their sins, he cannot take off the curse."

Almost in spite of herself she colored her words with her pity,

Dark in her soul underneath flowed a lone rill from the Gods.

But I could not help sighing aloud to her sigh :  
" They are free no longer !

In a prison they stand simply set up to be seen.

Once when they wooed in the world, they lived with the might of a passion,

Now they as captives, are held, suffered no longer to love."

Then she looked in my eye as if she suspected  
my matter,  
All at once a new rill bubbled up out of the  
depths,  
As her words in a mask took up the tone of  
inquiry :  
“ Have you never yet heard they have their  
worshipers still,  
Who are scattered all over the earth, in country  
and city ?  
Nobody knows who they are, or at what place  
they may live ;  
They are said to be born with a mark on their  
heart of this God-world,  
Which is unknown to their friends, even  
unknown to themselves,  
Till they read in a blood-sealed book which  
secretly tells them,  
Then to this worship they wake, though they  
know not what it is.  
Soon they start on a journey, they can hardly  
tell whither,  
But the road leads to Rome, still the old haunt  
of the Gods,  
Whose true followers secretly come on a festival  
ancient  
Though it be hid in the day sacred perchance  
to a Saint.  
Thus they flock from every part of the globe,  
from each nation —

From wild Tartary's East, from new America's  
West,  
All who, born out of time, are seeking their  
ancient heirship,  
For they feel they can find here the old deities  
yet,  
Who though once hurled down to be stones, with  
bodies all battered,  
Still can arouse the same spell as in the past  
when they breathed,  
For they possess the God's power to work upon  
men in the distance,  
And they would lose this gift, if they were  
taken from Rome.”  
Slyly that artful maiden peeped into my face as  
she said this,  
Trying to catch my thought as it took wing on  
a glance ;  
“ Is it so ? ” I asked then ; she answered, “ Yes, I  
believe it ;  
That is the power they have, drawing their  
own from afar.”  
Doubtful she stood for a moment, testing her  
thoughts in a balance,  
Not quite sure of herself ; soon she was braced  
to her words,  
And she continued : “ Now the clock strikes to  
ask you a question :  
Are you not one of these men, followers of the  
old Gods ? ”

I confess to you, long I have it suspected in secret,  
You have come over the sea, thousands of miles, to this spot;  
You are always haunting the sites of ruinous temples:  
Where these idols are, thither you hurry and stay.  
I have noticed you scarcely ever will go to the churches,  
And when you go, you hear never a word of the priest,  
Never will make the sign of the cross or bow to an image,  
But you look for old stones which in the wall may be built;  
Scarcely you glance, as you pass, at the picture of Saint or Madonna,  
Yet if some statue be found thither you run in a joy.  
Not one word concerning the Pope, no desire to see him  
Has been uttered by you, though I besought you one day;  
And when I asked you to go and witness the grand crucifixion,  
You were silent as death, as if I crucified you.  
Once the priest came and sprinkled our dwelling with sanctified water,

I saw you laugh to yourself when you thought  
I did not see;  
When I asked you that day if ever you went to  
confession,  
You ran out of the house, leaving me all to  
myself.  
If I but tell of the miracle wrought by some  
hallowed relics,  
Though you repress for my sake, you cannot  
hide what you are.  
Often you waft me away with the hand or shrug  
up your shoulders;  
You belong not to us, all of your mind is  
afar  
Back in the old days of Rome, although you were  
born in the present — ”  
Just at this moment she turned suddenly off  
with her glance,  
On the spot she was changed as her eyes caressed  
a small statue:  
“ See ! this boy is my choice if I dare choose  
of these stones;  
Winged he moves while dreamful he looks, yet  
laughs at his mischief;  
He cannot find what he is, I have been just in  
his place.  
Hear me ! At moments I seem to be born back  
into that old life ;  
When these idols I see, I have to love them  
myself.”

Closer she drew to my side and changed her tone  
    to a whisper,  
  For she feared her own voice when it burst out  
    of her heart,  
Lest it might utter the sin for which the whole  
    world was once punished;  
  Still she could not unsay what all her being had  
    said;  
There at once I felt the kiss of her soul — she  
    had found me,  
  Just as I had found *her*, when with my heart-  
    beats I cried:  
“ Call me by whatever name — be it heathen —  
    I know not my title,  
  Yet I know a delight which I have not felt  
    before;  
I cannot tell what it is, it came to me first with-  
    out knowledge,  
  Even far back in my years, longing I felt for a  
    world  
Which had passed on its course and taken my  
    heritage lovely;  
  Groping amid the dim Past, stumbling around  
    the wide globe,  
Over the ruins of Rome I fell in the midst of my  
    journey,  
  When I looked up I beheld just the fair world  
    that I sought.”  
“ Tell then,” she begged me, “ what is the  
    festival you are now keeping?

For a festal look you have been showing all day."

"This," I replied, "is the holiday sweet of the Muses and Amor,

Come now, let us go home, out of this marble to life."

### 3. The Roman Holiday.

Stones with voices, columns with music, temples with language,

Open your lips once more, speak me your spirit's still word!

Threading your ancient piles, I always come back to the modern,

Hunting for aught far away, I have discovered myself.

Give me the key-note of your great orchestra hewn out of marble

That the thought and the word I may attune to your strain.

What is that voice from the ruins! its music sings out of the distance!

What is that form I behold! lovely its look turns to me.

Is it the sound or the sight? O Rome, art thou song or a statue?

I cannot tell what thou art, I do not know what I am.

Let me be danced on thy billows of joy till I sink  
in thy ocean !

Listen ! already the strain ! See them ! the  
Goddesses come !

All the Muses are dancing a measure around  
Hippocrene,

Whose clear waters return ever their shapes to  
the eye ;

All the fair forms are divinely set free from the  
prison of garments,

With a light veil round the loins, gently they  
sway to the wind ;

All the Nine Sisters of song are sharing one soul  
in their beauty ,

There is now not a Muse absent or slighting  
her joy .

Often with hands joined together they swiftly  
encircle the fountain ,

Round it a garland they weave, which of their  
bodies is made ;

Often by threes they glide through curves of  
mellifluous movement ,

In a succession of wreaths crowning the pearl-  
dropping spring ;

Often they singly are leaping with graceful  
intoxication ,

Carving by gesture reliefs on the clear frieze  
of the air .

Always their bodies are singing in happy harmonious chorus,

Singing by motion they are like the sweet stars of the sky.

Always they turn to the fount that holds up before them its mirror,

In it they look at their forms, looking they show too the soul.

Always they dwell in a temple of golden Olympian sunshine;

Say can the shade of a cloud ever pass over this world?

Suddenly, madly into the group of innocent Muses

Down lights Amor the Winged. Shivered to drops is the rill,

Hippocrene grows turbid and restless, stirred by some passion,

While the dancers have ceased dancing their wreaths on the brink.

How each Muse endeavors to take the boy to her bosom!

Kisses his forehead and lips in a wild frenzy of love!

Amor, thou rogue of a Godling, all Nine at once are thy trophy,

Each too being a Muse dowered with beauty divine;

Was not one quite enough for thy triumph,  
insatiable gallant?

Must thou have all in thy might, meekly obeying thy nod?

Darest thou here, in the ancient walls of the conqueress mighty,

Make thy conquest too, swaying the body at will?

Darest thou here, in the sacred shades of hundreds of churches,

Build thy heathen shrine, guiding the soul by thy torch?

Yes, so it is — each Muse has become the servant of Amor,

Every note of her voice can but re-echo his name,

Which has been sung by the marbles of Rome for ages on ages

In her temples and halls, e'en it is heard from her tombs.

Amor, smallest of Gods, is the tyrant of sunny Parnassus,

Where he is perched on the peak, shooting his darts round the world.

But behold! now he comes, the lord of mighty Quirinus,

On whose seven hills high he triumphantly sits;

Still the deceiver, he hides his dart in the folds of the Muses;

Whoever seeks their embrace, by his sly arrow  
is stung.

O ye shrines and temples and statues, I feel your  
true worship,

Now I have found out your heart, felt too its  
beat in my breast;

And ye musical fountains throbbing up over the  
city,

Now I know whence ye come, what too ye say  
in your joy:

All the world thou art, O Rome, and yet without  
Amor,

All the world is no world, Rome too alone is  
not Rome.

#### 4 Found.

O, but the pleasure — and yet it is something far  
more than a pleasure

Which I am having at Rome, strolling in paths  
of the past.

What is the cause of this lofty attunement of all  
of the senses,

Waking a music within unto the music with-  
out?

And there is irresistible pressure of song in each  
heart-throb,

Seeking to measure itself out of the old to the  
new.

Give me the beat of thy numbers, O City, sing  
me the key-note  
Which may be heard underneath all thy great  
Present and Past.  
As to-day I sauntered along by the banks of the  
Tiber,  
An old lute-string I found dropped in the rub-  
bish of time;  
Out of the refuse I plucked the musical chord of  
the Ancients,  
Soon I had cleansed it of filth by a quick bath  
in the stream ;  
Home I hastened with joy, in triumph bearing  
the treasure,  
Fastened the string to a shell that in my room  
hung unused,  
Lightly I touched the new-strung chord with the  
tip of my finger,  
Hearkened the while for the note which it  
might throb to the air,  
For, O Propertius, I thought it might whisper  
the name of thy beauty,  
Or invoke a fair shape loved by a lyrist of  
old ;  
But another it lisped in words that were shock-  
ingly modern,  
Yet with a rhythmical stride tuned to the  
step of a Greek ;  
Only the name of a maiden it hums now — the  
stubborn old lute-string ;

But her dear body it wraps in a soft echo of  
folds,  
So that she moves in the drapery ta'en from the  
Goddesses' wardrobe,  
When they once dwelt on the earth, roaming  
with men in the fields.

### 5. The Open Secret

O ye talking marbles, galleries, palaces, ruins,  
What is the tale that I hear told by your  
voices of stone?  
Now before you I stand and joyously live in your  
presence,  
Question you much about Fate which over-  
took you of old.  
Speak from the heart of your hearts to the  
stranger your powerful secret,  
Which has drawn him to Rome wholly un-  
known to himself.  
All day long in your company strolling I eagerly  
hearken  
What to each other you say, what you are  
saying to me.  
And ye beautiful idols, let me interrogate briefly:  
Once driven out of the world, why now return  
ye to me?  
Say, does Amor always fly hither in search of  
his Psyche?

Do they, coming in stealth, find one another  
in Rome?

Look, a dark eye of the South has been kindled,  
I feel its fierce ardor  
Firing the air in its path with an invisible  
flame;

Coal I supposed to be black, but this jet of thine  
eye is far blacker;

Inside I know is a mine, see, too, the mine is  
on fire.

Filled with wonder and warmth, I gaze at the  
spray of its sparkles,

Down it drops at my glance, shutting me out  
with its lid.

What is this mystery seen in the eyes — the  
darker the brighter?

And the severer the burn, so much the more is  
the joy?

Nought can I see now, under an arbor of long  
slender lashes

Gracefully curving around, lie in concealment  
the orbs,

While above there glistens a frieze of the whit-  
est Carrera

Resting on two arches dark where is the portal  
of sight.

Cursed is ever the luck of the lover, my torch is  
extinguished

Just the moment it lit, held in the blaze of  
thine eye.

Now like a gleed that is dropped in its glow on  
the surface of water,  
It not only is quenched, but it is fuming in  
rage.  
Tender and fine is this flamelet of love, and pecu-  
liar in nature ;  
It must be kindled anew with every breath of  
the soul,  
Else it goes out with a puff that leaves us in  
dreariest darkness,  
Wherein demons run wild, feasting on hearts  
of despair.  
Seldom the flame will burn of itself, of its own  
precious matter ;  
Eye must look deep into eye, both are then  
kindled at once.  
What shall I do ? My look turns away to relieve  
disappointment,  
Seeks new objects of sight, rests on the form  
of a boy  
Who appears to shoot from a gleam and to glide  
into figure,  
On light pinions afloat — who can it be, do  
you think ?  
Fresh-fledged Amor it is, eternally flying in mar-  
ble,  
Now more than ever he speeds, bent on the  
weightiest task.  
In the unsteady soft light of the Moon, the lamp  
lit for lovers,

That with a sheet of white mist covers the court where we sit,  
Pallid marble has won a new life, and is gifted with motion:  
Amor now starts from his base, reaching aside for his bow,  
Carefully too he chooses a fine-pointed, well-feathered arrow  
From a full quiver of bolts slung at his side from a belt.  
Placed on the notch is the string, to the barb drawn back is the missile,  
Steady he taketh his aim, fixed on I know not what mark.  
Brave little Amor was floating in mild undulations of moonshine,  
Chirp sang the bow-string released — where has fallen the shaft?  
Startled from dreams by the twang of the bow and the whiz of the arrow,  
To the maiden I turned speedily casting a glance,  
Spying out whether she too had seen the wild doings of Amor —  
Mad, mysterious boy, recklessly shooting his darts  
In the dim moonshine which charms the eye to a dull sympathetic,  
Till dull flesh turns to sleep while the light soul is a dream.

Gods! each ray of her eye has become a fleet  
fiery arrow,  
Through my poor bosom have passed quiver  
and bolts and the bow.  
Now I can tell you where that shaft of mad  
Amor has fallen,  
Why he moved from his base wrapped in the  
robes of the Moon.  
Colonnades Roman, by night and by day, what  
lessons ye teach me,  
As I wander in joy through all your forests of  
stone!  
Now I know what you mean, ye parks, museums  
and gardens,  
What ye galleries say, peopled with sculpture  
antique;  
All of you hold in your hearts the beautiful secret  
of Nature,  
Which you whisper to me haunting your  
presence just now:  
“ We are the servants of Amor, through us he  
discovers his Psyche,  
Each of them comes to our Rome out of the  
ends of the earth,  
Both of them longing, yet wholly unable to tell  
what they long for,  
Till they enter our home, still the old home of  
the Gods.  
When the two lovers behold us, then they have  
found one another,

E'en in the church they embrace, taking it all  
to themselves."

#### 6. August Roma and Roman Augusta.

Speak to me, Rome, what art thou — heathen,  
barbarian, or christian ?

Or perchance all three blended together in one ?  
Three great Romes I can see, the old and the  
new and the middle ;

Tell me where I belong, I do not know it  
myself.

When I look at these ruins and temples, I am an  
old Roman,

But when the maiden appears, down to the  
present I drop

Suddenly through two thousand years without  
ever stopping,

Then I take breath from the fall, I am again  
on my feet.

Two are my fair ones, august Roma and Roman  
Augusta,

They together belong both in the name and the  
deed.

One has beauty of greatness, the other has  
greatness of beauty,

Each is the image of each, mother and daughter  
I love.

But the time is too precious just now to praise  
the high mother,

Here is the daughter alone springing down  
into my boat,  
For an afternoon ride on the back of old Father  
Tiber ;  
Gaily she seizes the oars, over the current we  
speed,  
Merrily dancing along on the up and the down  
of the wavelets,  
To some invisible heart swelling and sinking  
in tune.  
Stay, O Sun, in thy course, restrain the mad  
flight of the Hours,  
Look from thy chariot on high, ponder the  
glories of Rome ;  
Nothing so great has ever rose under thine eye  
on this planet,  
Thou, I know, hast seen all, measuring bloom  
and decay ;  
Stop thy steeds for to-day, let them rest on the  
slopes of the mountains  
Ere thou fling thyself down under the waves  
of the sea ;  
Pour thy fiery glances over the grand Colosseum,  
Burnish anew the old fanes with thy warm  
shimmer of gold,  
Climb the dome of St. Peter's as if thou wert  
mounting the heavens,  
Peep with thy passionate gleam into the  
windows and halls.

Cast all thy glow on the yellowish curls of old  
Father Tiber,  
Stoop down into his bed, swim with him here  
at our side,  
Enter the boat, and look along with me on her  
who is lovely,  
Hark, the sweep of her arm siugs a refrain to  
the boat;  
As it rises and falls to the rythmical flow of the  
water,  
Beautiful verses she makes out of thy sunshine  
to-day.  
Verses — them I shall copy — Where is my note-  
book? List to the time-beat —  
One with the heart of the world, one with the  
old and the new.—  
“ Give me your glances and spare me your  
numbers,” the maiden responded,  
“ Tethered your tongue cannot move to the  
grand gait of the South.”  
“ Nay but I must,” I replied, and started at  
once with my task there,  
Making all of great Rome dance up and down  
to the beat;  
“ See my refractory English keeping its stroke  
to thy oar-blades,  
And with thy body I count measures that  
flow like the folds,  
Running into hexameters, into pentameters also,

With the to and the fro rolled from the sway  
of thy shape.

Thus my lines I set down, borne along by the  
joy of the current;

Who can resist the sweet spell, waked in the  
heart by the Muse?

But I confess at times I am lost in the trance of  
thy movement;

And I miss the right stroke in the delight of  
my mood;

Blame me not if once in a while I fall out of  
measure,

With a fresh look at thy form I shall come  
back to myself.

In this presence old Homer would madly break  
loose from his numbers,

For a caress now and then, freed from the  
bondage of speech."

Then I pick up my dangling line, just where I had  
dropped it,

Mend it anew with a word — none can say  
where was the break.

Thus we dally down stream till we pass by Monte  
Testaccio,

Dreaming the dream of the world, as it here  
happened in Time.

Through the centuries past we are floating down  
into the present,

Into the future we glide, castles we see in its  
dawn.

Suddenly springs up the maiden, dropping the oars in her terror ;  
“ How shall we ever get back over the dash of the waves ?  
I must turn round and work for dear life against the wild current ;  
Harder it is to stem, when you have gone with the stream.”  
“ Be not anxious, O Dearest, fling to the Fates what must be,  
Is not to-day a reward for all the spite that can come ?  
Leave thyself to the Gods, and follow wise Tiber’s example,  
He forever flows down, down to the infinite sea,  
But he somehow always returns to the tops of the mountains,  
Whence again he descends into the valley and plain.  
Two are the streams of the wonderful river, the upper and lower,  
Mounting in clouds to his source, falling in rills to the sea,  
Down hill to-day on the earth, to-morrow up hill through the heavens —  
Give me an oar ! there it strikes ! now I shall help thee turn round.”

## 7. On the Pincio.

Grand is the sight and sovereign — look and  
become immortal !

All of the city is set golden in rays of the  
sun ;

Dearest, stand here and sweep over Rome from  
this height on the Pincio !

What has ruled in our world thou wilt now see  
in a glance.

Here to the left is the Capitol, there to the front  
is St. Peter's —

Two great masters of Time seated on two  
Roman hills..

Sung by the musical stones from the tops of the  
loftiest steeples,

Chanted by grim grizzled walls which the  
dark cloister engird,

Whispered even by urns whose ashes long since  
have been scattered,

What is that voice over all ? Hear it again in  
these lines.

One great word I can catch from the heart of the  
city eternal,

That is the word which unites two loving hearts  
into one.

Come, let us turn to these trees for relief, we  
are gilding the daylight,

Dreaming the hours away drowned in a worldful  
of joy.

Let us seek some repose from the pitiless arrows  
of Amor,

Under this deep-leaved oak watching himself  
in the pool.

How serenely he gazes in mild contemplation  
forever

Viewing his sinuous limbs knotted in might for  
the blasts !

Stooping forward a little for firmness he stands  
like an athlete

Ready to strike or be struck ; covered with moss  
are old wounds.

Here on his roots let us rest like the idle poetical  
shepherd,

While we look at yon swan sporting his down  
on the pond.

Beautiful oarsman in white, he propels unerring  
his pinnace,

In each movement is grace, in all exertion is  
ease.

Placid is sleeping the water, showing pellucid  
the bottom,

Only the yawl of the bird laughingly wrinkles  
its face.

See the oars of his feet, how they work in motion  
transparent !

Under the water the down sendeth the gleam  
of the dawn.

Proudly rises the neck of the swimmer upheld by  
the Graces,

Sweeter than honey of bees is the distillment  
of form.

With one thrust through the crystalline surface  
down to the bottom

Deftly its ebony bill spoons up the glittering  
sand.

Gracefully curves that long supple neck with its  
feathery flexure,

As in a crystal preserved, though it is moving  
the while.

Bird, a sculpture thou art, disrobed of Pentel-  
can marble,

Clear as the light is thy life, beautiful, too, as  
this day ;

Or a God perchance, into thine his body trans-  
muting,

Bringing thy fragrance of form from his  
Olympian home.

Leda once sat on this bank and gazed at thy neck  
till she loved thee ;

Softly thou swim'st to the brink, holding her  
eye in thy power ;

Up the bank thou hast crept, how white are the  
arms that surround thee !

Like the marble the breast where thou art  
clasped in embrace ;

Loosened now is the zone, revealing the shape of  
the Graces,

In that old innocent world free of our guilt  
and our shame ;

Under the strokes of her palm rears the neck of  
the silvery swimmer,  
Quivering fiercely with joy in the soft wake of  
her hand ;  
Look ! the swan is changing ! the plumage turns  
to a lover  
Who appears a white form like in his glance to  
a God !  
Do I yonder behold the summit of snowy Olym-  
pus ?  
Is it Zeus that I see, father of Gods and of  
men ? —  
Dearest, again he is here, — that untamable  
rogue of an Amor,  
He has transformed himself into the swan on  
the pool ;  
With his white plumes he feathers his arrow so  
subtle, unerring,  
Now the whole bird is cloud streaming forth  
showers of darts ;  
Vain is the flight from a God who commands like  
a tyrant all Nature,  
Changing it at his caprice into sly weapons of  
war.  
Running away from Love's bolt, I run right into  
his battle,  
Fleeing the face of a God is but to leap to his  
arms.

What a world thou art, O Rome ! and yet I would  
have thee none other,  
Wert thou not what thou art I could not be  
what I am.

8. In a Roman Wineshop.

Mountains are laughing for glee, and the willows  
are weeping for gladness,  
Even the winds give a sigh from the excess of  
their joy,  
Trees come out in their passionate green, and  
are kissed by the summer  
While the amorous vine fondly is hugging the  
elm,  
In each other's embrace both shoot into leaflets  
and fruitage ;  
High the herds on the hills rollick together in  
pairs.  
Nature has put on to-day her new dress with a  
thousand of jewels,  
One huge diamond the sea sprinkles the air full  
of stars,  
Emeralds cover the slopes, amethystine the bend  
of the heavens,  
While the clouds are just now purest of pearls  
set in gold,  
Which the first goldsmith, the sun, has blazoned  
with all of his cunning

For the necklaces fair worn by Olympian  
queens.  
 Yonder the Tiber is pouring in fun the flood of  
his amber,  
 But a ruby I hold, gem of all gems, in my  
hand,  
 Laughing me straight in the eye with hundreds  
and hundreds of sparkles,  
 Ogling, coquetting in gleams, filling the room  
full of smiles —  
 'Tis this wine. "Say, what is thy name, dear  
youth?" "Alessandro."  
 "Hast thou been long in Rome?" — "In the  
next house I was born." —  
 "And thou servest this wine of the Gods for the  
banquet of strangers?  
 And the grace of thy form here thou dost pour  
with the draught?  
 Ganymede be thou to me, with thee I shall mount  
to Olympus;  
 Speed thee, another full bowl rounded with  
rubious beads."  
 See! Alexander the Great has become Alessandro  
the Greater  
 Who is a conqueror too, helping me conquer  
the world.  
 O ye Great Men of Rome, ye children of glory  
eternal,  
 What is your triumph to mine, here as I sit in  
your place?

Thou, O Cæsar, mayst push out thine arms to  
the ends of the empire,  
Over the Euphrates leap, mount to springs of  
the Nile,  
Reach over Britain afar, and take in thy hand  
the whole Earth-ball —  
Still too small are its bounds for all thy might  
and thy mind.  
Put under law all the nations, mark out the path  
of the ages,  
Stride from the east to the west, sweeping  
aloft with the sun,  
High overarch with thy deed the past, the present,  
the future —  
I to the wineshop shall go, lord of the universe  
too.

#### 9. The Roman Cupbearer.

Alessandro, the wine that is poured with thy  
hand has a flavor  
That not elsewhere in Rome has been revealed  
to my lips.  
Now thou art humbly a cupbearer here in this  
old dingy tavern  
Who once nectar didst serve in the bright pal-  
ace of Jove.  
The aroma of banquets ambrosial breathes from  
thy manner

As thou biddest the guest here to recline for  
his cup ;  
And thy movement already imparts to me inebri-  
ation  
Ere the wine has been raised to my unhallowed  
lips.—  
Mark but the path of his body as lightly he treads  
through the winehall  
For the Graces you see drawing each line of  
his gait ;  
Would that his walk to yon door this instant  
were frozen to marble !  
So might I always behold how young Apollo  
doth move.  
Cannot those outlines of air through which he has  
passed, be transmuted  
By some magical breath into Carrera the white ?  
Long ago lived a race which had faith in beauty  
immortal,  
Faith created a hand gifted with cunning di-  
vine,  
And that hand could turn into stone at the touch  
of a finger  
Mild repose of the God, or his swift movement  
in wrath.  
But that race has departed, and now for the  
deed of the Hero  
Is but the mould of the air into which first it  
was cast,

So that the godlike action is seen in the world no longer

Fixed for the eye in the form which it received at its birth. —

Here thou comest with Bacchus — fill to the brim, Alessandro ;

O, thou art pouring thy grace with the clear stream of the wine.

Thou, I now know, wert Ganymede, cupbearer of the Immortals,

And immortal thyself, shining serenely as they.

For the old Gods of Greece are here passing their ages of penance,

Here at Rome, for their sins; one sees them oft in the streets,

Oft in churches, in penitent prayer for some restoration,

Darkly feeling their fall from a divinely high world.

But Alessandro, thy food still droppeth from tables celestial,

Graces thy body annoint, though they refuse their long folds.

Happy symposiums held long ago in the halls of Olympus

Look from thine eye of delight, show in the wave of thy hand.

On the air the soft undulation of movement is sculptured

As thou disdainest the floor with thy invisible wings ;  
Worthy in beauty to deck the high frieze of some ancient temple  
Would be the lines of thy limbs raised from the Parian block.  
Youth too bathes thy muscles so light in its tireless essence,  
Thou dost spring with the morn till the mid watches of night ;  
Still thy limbs are not weary, thy gait is filled with its motion,  
Not a line shrinks away though all thy minutes are leaps ;  
Nor have I ever beheld thy features grow dark with vexation,  
But thy humor serene laughingly sparkles at Fate.  
Intoxication thou art, Alessandro — I feel its mild madness  
Fragrantly rise to my brain, subtly commingled with wine.  
Thee I bespeak when my journey has led to the winehall of Hades ;  
Cupbearer mine thou shalt be when I shall quaff with the shades.

## 10. The Goddess of the Capitol.

Joyfully all the day long I visit the galleries  
    Roman,  
Sink in their spirit and spell till to my time I  
    am lost;  
How the glad Hours pour up to the brim the  
    wine of enjoyment,  
Till the cup, overfull, spills its choice drops on  
    the ground!  
Quite too much have I seen and enjoyed of this  
    banquet immortal,  
Senses are dulled with delight, I cannot look  
    any more.  
So I say to myself: I now shall go home for my  
    sunshine,  
After a kindly rest, I shall take hold of my  
    pen,  
And a poem shall write that runs to the beat of  
    old measures,  
Though they must speak my own tongue,  
    speak, too, my heart in their words.  
Then I reflect just how I may build the new work  
    to perfection:  
In this Rome it must lie, as in a setting of  
    pearls,  
And it must have the long colonnade of a classical  
    temple,

Through whose spaces is seen freely this Nature outside,  
But within the fair temple must rise up the holy inclosure,  
Where the high Goddess doth stand, lit from the light of the sky.  
Unto her I shall hymn in all the keen rapture of beauty,  
Then in life I must have what is her counterpart true;  
Naked and cold are these marble joys of ideal existence,  
If flesh and blood do not come warming their nudity chill.  
Thus I have planned, already the measures are humming within me,  
Even I change my gait, for I must walk to their stroke;  
Slowly I saunter along by myself on the way of Four Fountains,  
Look at Quirinal the grand, rounding a verse to my mood;  
See! a shape darts past! in disguise yet seeming to know me!  
Hiding itself it appears, willing yet not to be hid.  
I must follow the charm and discover this secret of nature:  
Ha! it is thou in a mask, telling me still what thou art.

Why hast thou covered to-day the Junonian bend  
of thy forehead  
With that envious hood made to conceal what  
is fair?  
Under monotonous wrappage thou hidest the  
sweep of thy figure,  
That once rose in soft swells through all the  
harmonies sweet;  
And the caress of mine eye thou refusest, un-  
scrupulous maiden  
After toying so oft with its fond credulous  
beams?  
Now it is time, I see, of myself to disburden thy  
presence;  
Yet unwilling art thou that I at once should be  
gone?  
Fair dissembler, I know thee; — 'tis an old trick  
of you women:  
You will seem hard to catch when you already  
are caught.  
Strauge how early young Amor, divine precep-  
tor, has taught you  
That we men love the chase, when we must  
toil for the game.  
Ha! the trouble I see, thou art jealous of stones  
and of statues!  
To the Goddesses fair overmuch time I  
devote.  
Come now, let us talk sense; each word be the  
word of pure wisdom,

Speedy amends I shall make, reaping the harvest of Rome.

Here sit down at my side, and let me recount to thy glances

What to-day I have found, seeking the treasures of sight.

Quick was my step this morn to ascend the Capitoline Hillock,

There to behold the fair forms which were once worshiped as Gods.

Through the long passage I wandered where, on each side of the gazer,

Hoar divinities look, yet they appear not to look.

Many a shape I beheld of the Cæsars, great men and women;

Dreamful Brutus was there, man with the face of a child;

On a tree leaned the Satyr, shiftless, in sunshine eternal,

While Alexander the Great conquered the world at a glance;

Youthful Antinous gazed upon Fate with the sorrow of ages,

In the center lay Death — turn, let us go back to Life.

Then alone in a joy I slipped to the chamber of Venus,

Who here awaits at her shrine those who may come to adore;

Free of the presence of men was the neat little  
house of the Goddess,  
Who, still loving the laugh, smiles on be-  
holders of faith.  
There she stood in her glory, revealing her shape  
to a mortal,  
Though she played with her hand over around  
and adown,  
Seeming to try to conceal from mine eye her  
fairest perfections,  
Which in their form most allure when to be  
hid they appear.  
Ha ! the first woman thou art and also the last,  
in this marble  
Caught by a cunning Greek hand fast in thy  
beautiful lines,  
Which are holding all nature forever here fixed  
in a gesture,  
Hiding unhidden thy charm, speaking un-  
spoken thy thought.  
Lovely Queen of the Capitol, now I know thee a  
Goddess,  
For thou revealest thy form by thy conceal-  
ment divine;  
From the eye and the heart of the mortal thou  
winnest devotion,  
He is forced to behold what thou dost feign to  
conceal.  
Ere he is ware, he is tranced in the ecstasies  
deep of thy worship,

Thralled by thy gesture and look, which by  
refusal allure.  
For the assent of thy soul assumes the coy form  
of denial,  
And thy No works a spell deeper by far than  
thy Yes.  
Therein must I adore thee as the divine one of  
women,  
Whose first art is to hide what she most helps  
to be seen.  
But not too far must thou push thy ambiguous  
play, sportive Goddess,  
Else thy shrine will be left by the proud man  
in despair.  
Herein divinity lies: to keep in the distance  
fruition,  
But not hope to destroy in the sweet prelude  
of love.  
Let me be tossed by thy hand like a ball between  
hope and fulfillment;  
Always the first let me have as the choice food  
of the soul,  
But the second — play it before me — a vision  
Olympian  
Which my touch will not bide, though I must  
ever pursue. —  
Thus I spoke to the Goddess, and yet I spoke to  
the maiden,  
Somehow the twain were blent into one shape  
to mine eye;

Such are the tricks thou playest, O Rome, beguiling  
the stranger;  
Each seems the copy of each, both are the  
woman I know.  
I cannot tell it — which is the marble and which  
is the maiden?  
Breathing the statue now moves, gives a sweet  
look, then a kiss.

## II. Nature and Art at Rome.

Often I know not what I should think of this  
nudity Roman,  
Which in each street and each house meets me  
and speaks with a charm ;  
That old world must have been more natural  
even than Nature,  
What a delight in the form ! — is it my right  
or a sin ?  
These fair shapes of cold marble are altogether  
too life-like,  
Do they cleanse us of dross, or do they rob us  
of shame ?  
Classical is the sweet dance of the senses  
sporting in sunshine,  
But the Teutonic fiend creeps on the joy of the  
South.  
Somehow to-day bright Rome is darkened with  
grim Northern devils,

Which I have brought from my home over the  
ways of the sea ;  
The Antique I must leave for a time, its truth is  
too naked,  
Under the ban of the law, ages on ages it  
lies.  
So to-day I shall follow the law, the stern law,  
though it slay me,  
Just for one day I abjure wholly the beautiful  
world.  
Off I run from the city that I get free in the  
country,  
Breathe of the sinless hills, drink of the inno-  
cent brooks,  
As they leap down the slopes not far from Castle  
Gandolfo,  
By the Alban Mount rocking the cradle of  
Rome.  
See, I have to turn back to that fountain — gone  
is resistance —  
To the fountain of rills where are the washers  
at work ;  
Just a moment ago I passed them with fierce res-  
olution,  
Now so soon I return, drawn by the spell of the  
sight.  
What is the witchery in yon maidenly shape that  
allures me ?  
I am afraid that I like more than I ought what  
I see.

Bare to the knee for her labor, she stands in the  
flow of the water ;  
Why not a nymph of the stream seen by some  
fabulist old ?  
Strong is the sweep of her figure like an athlete  
in wrestling,  
Golden her hair falls down in a lone braid to  
the waist,  
Many the seams of rich metal appearing to  
thread through her tresses,  
Shifting their glistening hues under the sun-  
shine and shade.  
When she bends up and down, the rise and the  
fall of her body  
Dances me over its waves as I were tossed on  
the sea,  
And the soft tint that blushes her face and  
blanches her forehead,  
Comes from a wind-winged hand held from the  
tops of the hills.  
Nor could the eye-sight easily turn from the hem  
of her kirtle  
Which was trying to hide, modestly naked,  
the limbs ;  
Then the vision would wander along her arm's  
gentle taper,  
Till it would drop on her breast, sucking  
deep joy like a babe.  
Through mine eyes I was juggled once into  
sweet dreams of palpation,

And my looks by her form were into finger-tips turned.

Not in vain, O Rome, have I fled from thy galleries lofty,

Here is the gallery true holding fair life in its bloom;

Nature herself is my guide now eager to show me her sculpture

In the first workshop of Time, hinting the sources of Art.

But I had often to laugh at the passionate gush of the fountain,

As it bubbled and seethed, full of the stormiest love.

Round her ankles it raved, oft trying to struggle up further,

Till the knee it would kiss in a mad fit of desire,

Then it would fall back into the current, by effort exhausted,

Glad to sink into nought, for such a moment of bliss.

Hark within me! a judgment I hear against the wild fountain!

Shall it follow its law which is but Nature's decree?

Shall I follow my law, which, pitiless, makes me its victim?

Or shall I joyfully flow down with the stream to the plain?

Every drop of that rill, though brewed on the  
tops of the mountains,

In a frenzy appears, it has refused to run on,  
But it whirls in currents and eddies around the  
white members,

Seeking to swoon to a kiss where it might fall  
on her form.

Some in their vehemence even leap up in the  
air to behold her,

As if each little globe were a lone passionate  
soul.

Look ! the whole brooklet is now one boisterous  
flutter of impulse,

Goes where it ought not to go, does what it  
ought not to do.

Yet how clear and happy it leaps from its mount-  
ainous sources !

Nature has poured its heart full of a thrill  
and a bliss,

And whenever it sees with its myriads of crys-  
talline eyelets

Beautiful things for the sense, it with new  
ecstasy springs.

Hark again to the law ! “ Here stay no longer  
with nature ;

Not bare life must thou see, but the fine spirit  
of life ;

Gross are the senses if not transfigured to vision  
beyond them,

Not for the form must thou love, but for the  
God in the form.'

Such was the deity's voice, proclaiming the law  
of Olympus;

Now I am ready to go, leaving the washers  
behind;

Rome, to thee I return, thou hast found the  
secret of Nature,

I in thy marbles must find what is the secret  
of Rome.

## 12. On the Tiber.

Look! the God of the River is swimming in  
rage down the valley!

Come, let us mount him and ride, testing his  
mettle divine.

How he maddens and whirls back his yellowish  
locks in the passage!

Thrice he bends his huge form, struggling to  
crawl through the town.

In the effort he hisses and squirms and twists  
like the Hydra

Till he has wound past the walls, gliding away  
to the sea.

What is greatest in action, what in thought is  
most regal;

What is most beautiful too, in his three folds  
he has caught;

Under the bridges he rolls and sweeps by the  
palaces lofty,

While he holds in his coils worlds that are  
old, that are new.

Tell me, O River, what is the source of thy  
power so lasting?

Why has the Earth such a charm just at this  
spot on her face?

Enter the pinnace, O Dearest, let us surrender  
our bodies

To the Tiber's embrace, though he look sullen  
and dark.

True it is that his forehead is moody with striving  
and turmoil

From his grim struggle with earth that would  
confine his free stream;

And his breast is turbid and swollen with throes  
of his passion,

As he hurries along in a low mutter of wrath.

But when he meets at the end the translucent  
Sea, his happy beloved,

Lying in boundless repose under the eye of  
the Sun,

With her he minglest his waters, placid they rest  
in her bosom,

To her crystal transformed by the embrace of  
her love;

For her purity washes his face of the slime of  
the conflict,

All his violent threats turn to the tenderest notes,  
And the Tiber is cleansed, though muddy and fretful his humor,  
To sereness and peace slowly transmuting his stream.  
Enter the pinnace with faith, and let us be rocked on his wavelets  
Into that quiet sea where we behold his repose ; I descry in the distance along the Western horizon  
Waters that sparkle in dreams under the glance of the Sun. —  
Into the boat she has stepped with the fearless tread of a sailor,  
Firmly she grasps the rude oar that overfills her white hand,  
Laughingly leaps in the current the boat — I rejoice at the omen,  
Woman must labor with man on the rough river of life.  
Nay, her lot is the harder both in the toil and the danger,  
She performs the great work, he has to idly look on,  
She must surrender her body in trust for the being of others,  
Often her life she impawns for the new life of her love.

So I look at the maiden plying her oar in the waters,  
Whilst with my paddle I aid, guiding the flight of the boat ;  
Soon the red pencil of gentle exertion has tinted her features  
Toning nature's soft flush into the delicate white,  
As amid the pallid and fugitive light of Aurora Flashes the first-born ray fresh from the red-golden Sun.  
What is this mood that I hear attuned to the flow of the Tiber ?  
Is it the chant from yon church, or an old hymn of the God ?  
Hark ! her arms are thrilling the air into musical measures,  
While her hand in response whirls in broad circles the oar ;  
Forward she moves to the tune of the stroke on the billowy waters,  
Backward her body returns, ruled by the rhythmical wave ;  
Every bend of her form is a note of melodious movement,  
Struck from its home in the air, where it is hidden to all,  
Save when her grace reveals the abode of the dulcet vibration,

By a mere sweep of the hand, or by a cast of  
the head.  
What can it be that pours in my soul the full  
goblet of pleasure?  
Something my spirit inspires more than her  
look in its glow;  
All my senses are bathed in delicious dew of the  
fancy;  
Something commands these lines with a tyran-  
nical nod.  
Now in the shape of the woman I read the first  
poem of Nature,  
As she in Paradise rose mothering all of the  
world,  
In herself I can see her, methinks, as Adam  
first saw her  
Just as she moved in his glance, new from the  
hand of the Lord.  
How I float on the rise and the fall of a river of  
motions,  
To which the Tiber keeps time, hoary old God  
of the stream !  
He too is charmed, and raises his head from the  
bed of his waters,  
Shaking his chaplet of reeds, jealous of mortals  
he seems.  
But there is a whole Tiber within me, on it I am  
tossing,  
How I surge up and down driven by tempest  
and flood !

Has little Amor grappled the powerful God of  
the River,

There ! see his eye ! down he dives — under the  
surface he swims.

Kind Father Tiber, from the worry and whirl of  
thy devious current

Bear in safety our boat fleeing o'er shallows  
and slime ;

Then at last to the haven of Mediterranean  
quiet,

Rocking thy cradle of waves, float us along on  
thy stream.

### 13. The Old Titan at Rome.

Fleet run the days as I trip light-hearted from  
temple to temple,

Though but a fragment the fane, still it hath in  
it a God ;

Let it be but the drum of a column, a piece of  
a cornice,

In it the nectar is caught dropped from Olympian feasts.

Here is a door in this dark dingy ruin, come,  
let us enter,

For the deity haunts all the old places he  
loved.

He will strike us a light if we look with the eyes  
of the faithful ;

Ha, a wineshop it is, here is a God that I know.

Speedily he will illumine our darkness with gleams of his sunshine,

Let us trust him at once that we may find out his will.

Alessandro, some wine ! the best from the hills of Albano !

Where on the sides of the mount vineyards are hung from the heights,

And their beautiful tapestry, woven of leaves and of sunbeams

In its quick changes of hue pictures the time of the year.

Speed, Alessandro, fetch while I tell of the wine of Albano,

Be the cup bearer thou, be we the Gods at the feast.—

There the earth is a cinder that glowed with an ardor volcanic,

In the mountain close by, ages unnumbered ago.

Now the blaze is extinct, no longer is heard the contention,

Stygian tasks are performed, days of repose we behold.

But the grape still draws up the glow that once gleamed in the ashes,

Sucks from the soil to itself slumbering sparks for the wine.

So the fierce dust of the Titan who raged long ago in the mountain

Still his spirit contains, still his wild fury imparts.

Then he was lord of yon summits, thence overran the Campagna,

Sweeping adown in his might from his high fastness of rock.

Also a cup he possessed, and still we call it a crater,

Goblet foaming with flames, flowing down over its sides

Into the valley below till reaching the current of Tiber

The red liquid is cooled mingled with watery draughts.

But now behold ! in place of the crater of Titanic monsters

Is the wine bowl of man sending up gently its sparks.

Thirsty mortals we are — to our lips it offers refreshment,

While it wakes in our souls Gods that have slept from our birth.

Look ! the old Titans still work, have a means of transmitting their power,

And for the men of to-day active they are as of yore.

Though they are dead in the hills and their bones through the valleys are scattered,

Still from their ashes they leap, live a new life  
in the cup.

'Tis the grape which begets them anew, yet  
softens their nature,  
And has distilled their dark force into a thou-  
sand clear drops.

Drink of him, comrade, till the red flashes along  
thy white forehead

I may behold—lightnings faint, dimly re-  
vealing the form

Of the huge Titan, as he once glared from the  
top of Albano;

Now he can send but a ray which doth illumine  
the face.

Yet how he labors to loosen himself from the  
grip of thy reason,

And to drive about wild in a mad frolic of  
yore!

Drink of him daringly—soon within thee the  
Titan will thunder,

Two little craters I see darting their flames  
from thine eyes.

One more drop, Alessandro; we have discovered  
the temple

And before we are done, we shall discover the  
God.

#### 14. Those Tell-tales, the Muses.

Fain would I hide in myself these joys of Roman  
existence,

But they sing of themselves into a verse ere  
they stop;  
Somehow they rise in a rapture and run at their  
birth into measure,  
Leaped they not with their feet, never would  
they be at all.  
So to the world my secrets are told by the garru-  
lous Muses,  
Who delight to repeat what tender souls may  
confide,  
And to robe soft whispers of love in the hues of  
the rainbow,  
Singing with passion aloud what is most hid  
in the heart.  
Those vibrations of fiery joy that thrill through  
the body  
They endow with a voice tuned to the music  
within;  
And my timorous fancies boldly they sing to the  
idle,  
Who are quick to repeat all that the gossips  
may teach;  
Even they lead before me my brain's illegitimate  
children,  
Whom I have to disown when I am faced by  
the law,  
Though the Muses malicious take pleasure in  
making them pretty,  
Dressed in imagery's pomp, graceful in move-  
ment and song.

But, oh ye tattlers, why did ye point out the  
brood to the maiden?

She is jealous, ye know, e'en of my thought  
yet unborn.

To what extremities by your wild frolic have I  
been driven !

From your wanton excess danger ahead I can  
see.

Once I controlled the tireless steeds of speech in  
their chariot,

Now by the Sisters the reins rashly are jerked  
from my grasp.

Silence, O sable mysterious Goddess of Night, I  
invoke thee;

Thy divinity now is the first word of my  
creed ;

Bring back the time I installed thee as faithful  
guard of my treasures ;

But thy seal has been broken, trampled thy  
jewels to dust.

Silence is gold, I have heard — 'tis more, 'tis the  
deep mine of diamonds

Which illumines itself, needing no lamp of the  
Sun.

To the man secretiveness is the flower of wisdom,

To the woman allowed is the light play of the  
tongue.

Thus my dissatisfied self I was propping with  
new resolutions

When the sound of a voice ran into verses at once :

“ But the Muses are women — from them to lock up thy secrets ?

To so many sweet lips wilt thou forbid the sweet word ?

Ah, nine men would perish weighed down by thy cruel injunction ;

But nine women — O fool, what has become of thy wits ?

This Italian sun, while heating thy heart into passion,

Also has baked thy brain into a handful of dust.

Mark ! thou wilt never again be free of those tell-tales, the Muses,

Hear ! they are telling just now secrets shut close in thy heart ;

Often already of thee they have told what should have been hidden,

They are not going to stop singing the music of Rome.”

### 15. A Little Roman Olympus.

Speak to me not, for my fancy is caught in a vision delightful,

And with a joy in the soul, who can abide the dull word ?

Still I shall feel it and say it and shape it to musical measures,

I must utter myself, e'en if I talk all alone.  
Every house is a palace at Rome, it may be a  
temple,  
Which some God doth indwell, Goddess you  
always will find.  
Nay, each room of the house has often a godlike  
possession,  
Visibly deity comes giving his gift unto all.  
What is now the delight? The Divine I have  
seen in a bath-room,  
Rather a shrine be it called which to devotion  
invites.  
Many divinities drop down silently into that  
chamber,  
Small is the size of the fane, yet it of beauty  
is full.  
How I happened to come to the place demands  
explanation,  
Here is the story of chance favoring worship-  
ers true.  
Long I had trodden the streets from the tops of  
the hills to the Tiber,  
Viewing the fountains of Rome, looking at  
Tritons and Nymphs —  
Forms of the water which leap into life up out of  
the water  
Blowing a stream through a shell, cowering  
under the waves.  
Of a sudden I came to a house which I knew by  
its door-step,

For I had been there before ; quickly the  
knocker I seized,  
Soon the door flew ajar, and a voice I heard at  
the threshold :

“ You are weary, I see; go, be renewed by  
the bath.”

What could I do but obey the command I already  
had wished for ?

In a spiral the stair led me up into the room ;  
There at the view the spirit took strength even  
more than the body,

For another small world I in deep wonder be-  
held.

Clear with a joy lay the fount in its bed of  
smooth alabaster,

Crystal both of them were, held in each other’s  
embrace.

Nor could you say first which was the water and  
which was the crystal,

Things so unlike in our world may be trans-  
parently one.

On the ceiling above was circling a garland of  
Amors,

Looking down at the fount which their sweet  
images held ;

All the delights of sunny Olympus arose from  
their gestures,

As they flew with their feet, as too they danced  
with their wings ;

And their infantile bodies sang with a musical cadence,  
Out of their motions of grace wreathing a roundel of love.  
Next on the wall, coy nymphs stood out in relief from the surface,  
All prepared to descend into the pool at their feet;  
Some, half unrobed, were playing amid the trees of the forest,  
Others, bared to the zone, wound in a knot their long hair.  
One, the fairest, had entered the limpid laugh of the water,  
Under the crystal you see lovely proportion of form.  
But on a pedestal yonder, above the glass of the fountain,  
Turning her glances aside into the mirroring depths  
Crouches Cythera. Happiest here she looks in her temple;  
Idly her garments are thrown over the vase at her side;  
Outlines of light are flashed from her body as fine as the sunbeams,  
Through a universe fair wholly made up of herself.  
As she beholds her true image returned from the water's reflection,

She has that which she is subtly revealed to herself.

Yet with a smile of content at the view, she is playfully seeking,

From her own eyes to conceal guiltless enchantments of form;

She would appear to be modest, aye, methinks to be bashful,

Willing again to unknow what she has willingly known.

Is it knowledge's modesty, or is it modesty's knowledge?

Were not Nature so near, I would maintain it were Art.

Whom dost thou see, O Goddess, what face peeps out of the water?

Lies beneath it some God, thence to behold thee in stealth?

Art thou playing, playing alone with thy sweet secret fancies?

And alluring art thou to thine own beautiful shape?

Look! there is in the fountain one who is furtively gazing,

But the intruder art thou, caught in that mirror and held;

Now thine image is slowly transmuted to Mars, to thy lover,

And from his mirrored glance thou art pretending to hide.

Bather divine, forever sporting in joy with thy fancy,  
Which, unknown to thyself, pictures another's fond face  
There in the fountain floating mid dreams enraptured of beauty,  
Feign from his glance to conceal what thou wouldest have him to see,  
Softly transmute the coarse senses to the fine spirit of vision  
Which doth the Goddess behold in the fair forms of the world.  
Everything in thy walls is divine, O Rome the eternal,  
Thou art the sum of thy works, yet thou art also thyself;  
But of all of thy works so divine, thyself art divinest,  
Thou art all of thy deeds, yet thou art something far more.  
Each little mark on thy face is a line of Olympian grandeur,  
And in thy presence to-day each little man waxes great;  
Thine is the power to stretch out the soul, the small soul of the mortal,  
Till it the universe fills, though thou art ruin and dust.

Even to bathe is a worship at Rome, a festival  
splendid,  
At which are present the Gods, nor do the  
Goddesses fail.

#### 16. Anticipation.

Which is the sweeter, the love of thy art, or the  
art of thy loving,  
I cannot tell O Rome, both of them are but  
one joy,  
And they spring from the same deep sources  
within the man's bosom ;  
Let him look into himself, there he the fount-  
ain will spy.  
Often I follow the one, but come in my search to  
the other,  
When the marble I seek, lo, it is life I have  
found.  
Love of thy art blends into the art of thy love  
in my journey —  
All without my design, I cannot help what I  
am.  
Often I query : Now which is the Goddess and  
which is the mortal,  
Both to Olympus belong, both too, belong to  
the earth.  
But in these verses, I know, is hidden a tempest  
of trouble,

Which is sure to break loose when I recross  
the great wave ;  
When out of reach of classical eyes beneath  
native beeches  
By some shepherdess fair I am enthralled once  
again.  
If I offer to pipe in her ear a pastoral ditty,  
She will quickly demand : “ Where is thy  
maiden of Rome ?  
Whose proud name thou hast woven in many a  
garland of flowers,  
Where I have read it oft mid their delicious  
perfume ?  
Well do I know she wore thy bright circlet of  
bloom and of blossom  
In the pride of a queen crowned with her jewels  
and gold.  
But no longer renewed by thy hand, the garland  
has withered,  
Under its wilted leaves it has become full of  
spines.  
All the sweet hours of beauty and love it has  
turned into torture,  
On the pitiless thorns blood may be seen from  
her brow.  
For thy poetical nosegay thou pluckest the heart  
of a maiden,  
Then thou leavest to wilt both the fond heart  
and the flowers.”

With excuses and circumlocutions and fiery denials

Singeing the garment of truth, scarce can I make a defense:

“ Pooh? that girl! she was only an allegorical maiden

Whom I found in Rome, using her just for my verse.”

“ Talk to me not—you poets are fond of our heart’s vivisection,

Bleeding the warm pulse of love that you may color your lines.”

To explain the old to the new is no easy matter,  
Many a fable I try tinted with imagery fair.

Prevarication is a rough road that always is jolting

Into a stammer the tongue when it may travel that way.

So I shall writhe under glances showering sparkles of anger,

Fickleness is the reproach, if not a worse charge be made.

What a horrible gallows is built of poetical measures,

If the poet must give rigid account of his lines!

Say, shall prosaic propriety throttle divine inspiration,

Or shall Pegasus still have the free range of the clouds?

But be silent, O Muse, let us take the warning  
in season,  
Gently rein in our steed, lest we be cast from  
his back ;  
Pegasus always mounts too near the planet of  
Venus,  
With the loose Goddess to stray even in  
heavenly fields.

## 17. Art and Life.

Chilly and stark to the touch is the crystalline  
form of the Goddess,  
She could make no response, if you would give  
her a kiss ;  
Therefore it is that I have to go back into life  
and the living,  
Then I can see with the touch, then I can touch  
with the eye.  
Thus I learn of the spirit that runs into lines of  
the marble ;  
Rising from sight to the soul, feel I an infinite  
sense.  
Rome, to-day thou art old, I too have grown old  
in thy ruins,  
To the fountain of youth I must return for a  
drink ;  
I am exhausted, I can no longer draw breath  
from these statues

Till again I behold all of their outlines alive.—  
“Thou art getting gray hairs, I can see one  
streaking thy temples,”

So I was teased by the maid, merry with  
youth’s sparkling wine.

“That I deny,” was my answer of warmth to  
the fell accusation,

“I have been snowed in not yet, by the fierce  
snow-storm of years.”

Ere I could turn she had plucked out the fiber of  
envious silver,

Held it up to mine eye laughing in triumph the  
while,

With the clutch of despair I grasped at the hor-  
rible trophy,

Still it dangled above reach as I might for her  
hand.

“That was a coward,” I cried, “from the one  
do not judge the whole army;

He alone has grown pale hearing the tramp of  
the years

In the distance, as they advance with slow-step-  
ping phalanx,

On the fortress of youth hurling the frost of  
old Time.”

While I was speaking, with dexterous hand she  
caught out another

Then another till three there she had conjured  
to view,

Three pale ghosts from the grave they suddenly  
rise on my vision,  
And a message they bring blasting with terror  
the soul ;  
For they are heralds, and they announce with  
the sound of the trumpet,  
That the dread tyrant, Old Age, comes and  
will soon be in sight.  
Rigid as stone I gaze at the specters more dire  
than Medusa,  
Now my head will be bleached white as the  
snow by the fear  
And to-morrow I, an old man, shall rise with the  
Sungod,  
Totter along down the street robbed of the  
half of my life.  
But O hear her, the brave and the youthful, chase  
off the monsters  
That are gnashing their teeth over my head in  
the air,  
For she speaks sweet words which are winged  
with arrows of Amor:  
“ Give me to bathe my hot hand in the fresh  
rime of these locks !  
I would like forever to sport in the flakes of the  
snow-fall,  
And my lips I would cool on the fresh brow  
of the frost.”  
Up, let us go; I now understand the spirit of  
marble,

Now I can see fair life move into lines of the  
stone,  
And from the Goddess' lips I can hear the un-  
speakable secret,  
As in my heart I behold how she becometh  
divine.

#### 18. Experience.

As I wander about in a joy from ruin to ruin,  
And from this church to that, where I may  
find an old stone,  
On the way I hold it a duty to peep into wine-  
shops,  
Which are happily ranged just on the path to  
the Gods.  
Oft I have tested the soul of the grape from  
Mount Fiascone,  
And the mad Titan I know lying on many old  
hills.  
Yesterday, let me confess, I took too much of the  
giant  
Who imparts his sly wrath still through the  
mild Alban grape;  
Treacherous is that draught when served from  
thy hand, Alessandro,  
For thy grace adds a drop trebling the ardor  
divine.  
First, a gentle succession of gleams illumed  
my horizon,

Giving new suns to the day, hanging new stars in the sky. •  
Soon it grew to a blaze, through the brain the lightning volcanic  
Flashed like a tempest unchained mid the wild waves of the sea.  
Then I saw in my dream the huge Titan rise up from Albano,  
Belching his fiery blasts with the mad eyes of revenge  
'Gainst the clear sunny home of Jupiter high on Olympus,  
Where calm reason and joy dwell on the heights with the Gods.  
How he bellowed and roared and grimaced in angry defiance!  
Dire was the pain of the cramp wrenching his bowels of stone.  
But there followed the mighty eruption, when the sick Titan  
Burst with retching his sides, all overflowing the plain.  
After his labor he fell into sleep, and I along with him  
Slept, till Apollo the bright laid his soft palm on my face.  
Now I am but a handful of ashes, like the old Titan,  
Scattered and sprinkled about over the fields and the hills.

Alessandro, no more of the giant to-day, I must  
gather

First my poor trunk and my limbs which have  
been strewn far and wide;

Henceforth I want but a drop of him, two drops  
or a wee third drop,

Just enough for a flash or a low growl of his  
wrath.

His inspiration I wish to possess without his  
convulsion,

Give me the might of his glow yet under rea-  
son's restraint.

Temperance now is my gospel, convincingly  
preached by this headache ;

But to-morrow once more set me the pearl-  
beaded bowl.

Too much divinity hath to-day overwhelmed me,  
poor mortal !

Still the God I must know, though he consume  
me in wrath.

#### . . . . . 19. Palingenesis.

Though these stones have been dug from the  
Earth and set up in museums,

Thou must excavate still all of them just where  
they are,

In thy life here digging them out of the dust of  
the Ages;

This old world now afresh thou must discover  
thyself.

Better it were to let it sleep on in the tomb it  
has chosen,

If it be not born with a new birth in thy soul;  
Do not disturb the dead, if thou canst not give  
resurrection;

Living and speaking with thee let them arise  
out the Past.

Here in death I find life enwreathing the tomb  
with its figures,

Over the coffined dust festivals sport in the  
stone.

In a circle around this sarcophagus leap the  
wild dancers,

Even the ashes repose mid a perpetual joy.

Look! the dead have a chorus of marble eternally  
moving!

Thou must divinity see smiting the world into  
nought,

And so making it live and last in new shapes  
forever!

Learn the ways of the Gods, though they appear  
in their wrath,

Though they strike thee down to the dust in the  
stroke of their presence:

Men can know the Gods only by feeling their  
blows.

## Book Second.

### Ex Urbe.

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#### I. Confession.

Much have I told thee, O reader, that nears the  
forbidden,

Much have I left untold sparing thy blushes  
and mine.

Was the old world more innocent, or only closer  
to Nature?

Having so much more of sin, have we so much  
more of shame?

Still I would reconcile freedom of yore with  
modesty modern,

Veil the sweet love of the South in the chaste  
soul of the North.

Rome a Paradise thou, still hinting the Paradise  
naked

Of old Adam and Eve, ere the first fig-leaf  
was sewed.

I can feel already I am too sinful to stay here,  
Out of this Garden so fair I shall be driven off  
too,

But not to-day. Arise once more, ye Gods and  
ye Heroes,

Aud ye Goddesses too — I am not done with  
you yet.

## 2. Vision of Castaly.

Tell me no news of the rest of the world, keep  
the newspaper from me,

Quitting the continent new, I would live back in  
the old;

Cæsar's hardiest soldier, Ovid's luxurious rival,  
Horace's friend I shall be, sharing his wine and  
his song,

Sipping the sparks of old Massic and singing sweet  
Lalage's laughter:

When I am in old Rome, I an old Roman shall  
be.

And to the school I shall go once more, to the  
poets of Latium,

But not a book I shall read less than two thou-  
sand years old.

Backwards further and further I move, for thus  
I move forwards,

Aye, beyond Rome I must go, she is not  
wholly her own.

Every road leads to Rome, but mine, I can see,  
leads through it,

Till I come to the source sending its beautiful  
rills.

Now in my mind I look on the fountain of  
Castaly limpid,

Whose clear waters reflect all the fair shapes  
of the soul,

As like bubbles they rise from the bottomless  
depths of the Fancy

Seeking a birth into Time with the rich dower  
of form.

I beseech the bright Nymph to hold up before  
me her mirror

That I may see the new brood whirled into  
life in my brain,

That I may see them, and quickly may draw  
their shadowy outlines,

Ere to Lethe they sink, whelmed at their birth  
into gloom.

If but once they should fall back into that stream  
of oblivion,

Orpheus e'en with his lyre cannot allure them  
to light.

Now in my thought the world rises up as when  
ruled from Olympus,

And to the beautiful halls each happy deity  
goes;

All of the Gods are marching along in the fragrance of movement,  
While the Goddesses' forms echo the music of folds.  
There I catch a sly glimpse of the harmonies hidden of Venus,  
Racking with rapture the look as she descends to the bath;  
But to-day with Paris I was on the Idæan mountain  
Where three Queens undraped stood in divinity's glow,  
Unto my mortal vision revealing their beauty immortal;  
Tinged with blushes divine, from me the judgment they sought.  
Long I looked at the movement of life in Castaly's mirror,  
Where is seen what transpires both on Olympus and Earth.  
Often I try to fasten in lines what I see in her waters,  
With a pencil antique limning Olympian forms;  
Yet, O Castalia, beautiful nymph of the crystal-line ringlets,  
Not alone do I see images held in thy hair,  
But thee too I behold, thy translucence unselfishly giving

To reflect other forms while thou art hidden  
thyself.

Jealousy never thy candor distorts or thy purity  
darkens,

Though a rival thou art to the Olympian  
Queens.

Thee I long to behold in thyself, in thy fountain  
at Delphi,

As thou risest above, out of dark chaos below,  
Showing thy beautiful form in the sheen of the  
God of the sunshine,

Who from his temple near by sings thee his  
wisdom and song.

### 3. The New Prometheus.

Once my soul was a monk, and my body was then  
but his cloister,

Daily I hid in my cell shunning the joy of the  
world;

Out of my thoughts I plaited a whip of hundreds  
of lashes,

Which would strike of themselves inwardly  
turned on my mind.

My delight was to find new ways of being tor-  
mented,

On my dissatisfied self madly I wielded the  
scourge.

But in Rome I am free, in the city of monks and  
of cloisters,

Fire has driven out fire, yet it has left me  
afire.

So a new trouble has subtly now taken the place  
of the old one,

Still the delight, O the delight just in the  
twinge of its pain.

Can it be that I have been playing the rogue and  
have stolen

Under Amor's wild lead flames that belong in  
the skies?

Let me confess — 'tis the fire of Heaven, and it I  
have stolen,

Hidden it deep in my heart visible scarce to a  
God.

Ah Prometheus, hoary old sinner of ages Titanic !

Still thy example misleads, nor can thy penance  
deter.

Led by the beautiful flash and the sparkle I toyed  
with the flamelet,

Wished it soon to be mine, slyly I took it  
along ;

Then I went to my walk in the grove of Villa  
Borghese,

Nursing the spark with my breath, dreaming  
of raptures to be.

Jupiter, mightiest God of Olympus, jealous of  
mortals,

Missed the fire from his hearth, when his high  
palace grew cold

From its absence — for he, though a God, is  
warmed in its ardor,  
Even descends from the skies for the luxurious  
flame ;  
Danae, Semele, witnesses be ye, with thousands  
of others,  
Who earthly lightning aroused in the Great  
Thunderer's breast.  
Casting his all-seeing eye through the nooks of  
his limitless domains,  
Me he beheld down below fondling in fancy  
the flame,  
Wrapping it over and over in layers of images  
Roman,  
Making it dance to a tune drawn from the  
music of Greece,  
As beneath the cool shade of a laurel, beside a  
clear fountain  
I was lying in ease shunning the heat of the  
day.  
With the soul in a dream there mingled the sound  
of the waters,  
As they murmured and sang with the sweet  
voices of nymphs  
Called Naiads — who chirp in the brooks and  
dance in the fountains —  
Water no longer assails but it encourages fire.  
All at once a vulture swept down through the  
branches umbrageous,

Sent by Olympian Jove, ruler of men and of  
Gods,  
And infixed in my heart his beak and eats of it  
daily,  
Daily it groweth again furnishing new his  
repaſt.  
Chained to a pitiless rock now behold me, a  
second Prometheus!  
I forever am gnawed, never consumed or  
relieved.  
What can I do? — Good soul, await thou heroic  
deliverance,  
For thy Hercules comes, mighty endurer of  
toils,  
Who subdues the dread birds of the air for his  
people. I tell thee,  
Jove with his thunderbolt barbed can not detain  
thee in pain.

#### 4 Metempsychosis.

Days come alike with the Sun, yet different some  
are from others,  
Some to the future belong, others go back to  
the past;  
All of to-day has been floating about me an old  
reminiscence,  
I have lived in a world born long before my  
own birth,

And I am at this moment no more than a memory  
ancient,

Which is straying around, lost in the present  
by fate.

Hoary philosophers meet me and speak, Pytha-  
goras, Plato:

“ Now you may know what we meant when we  
discoursed of the soul.”

This high hour is not of to-day, it is an odd  
moment of Homer,

Which into sunshine was dipped once when in  
Chios he sang

Thousands of years ago — perchance before *him*  
it was singing —

Now to the earth re-born, it has come singing  
to me.

Through a long gallery built of the ceaseless  
addition of ages,

Voices oft drop on mine ear that have reached  
down from old Rome;

And as I go up the street and walk under arches  
triumphal,

What is that shout on the air peopled with  
millions unseen?

Yon red obelisk heavenward pointing its finger  
of granite

Is still telling the tale once to the Pharaohs  
told;

It is also a traveler, far from its home it has  
wandered

Where it first saw the God kissing the land of  
the Nile ;  
Centuries long it stayed in its city of light by  
the River,  
City built to the Sun at the new dawn of the  
world.  
But the moment arrived when it too had to start  
on its journey,  
Rounding the circle of Earth, seeking to come  
to itself.  
Stopping at Rome it stood up for ages, then fell  
and was buried,  
But resurrected you see all of its body once  
more,  
Here by the Lateran patiently waiting for new  
transmigrations,  
For again it must fall, it must arise too again.  
What am I but a wanderer here, an obelisk,  
statue !  
Mid these ruins I stray that I discover my-  
self ;  
I must see what I was when a Greek I was born  
or Egyptian,  
Pilgrim I come to my Rome seeking the shrine  
of my Gods.  
Soft flow the hours, O maiden, if fondly thy lips  
are attuned  
That they utter low notes borne from thy  
bosom of trust ;

For whenever I hear the tale of thy life and thy  
longing,

It is the sound of a voice echoing down ancient  
halls;

And I behold the hoar shape from which thy soul  
is descended—

The proud soldier of Rome who in thy words  
comes to life.

So after thousands of years the spirit returns to  
the body,

From its wanderings dark down in the realm  
of the shades,

And once more it puts on new vestments of  
youth and of beauty,

Fleeing dim Hades' abode, clad for the light  
of the sun.

Of its former dear self it retains many dark  
recollections,

Which still guide and forewarn, whisper of  
sorrow and joy;

And the woman if she delight in some ancient  
action

That enkindles the page where the high record  
she reads,

Till her heart is wrapped in the flames of a pas-  
sionate genius

Which with its power unknown makes her far  
more than herself—

She was the hero, she was the soul that gave  
birth to the action

In the bright world long ago. But if the deed  
be a myth,  
Shaping to beautiful words the spirit of long  
generations,  
Words with high fantasy's stamp, coined by  
the Poet divine,  
Who can charm hoar fabulous shapes from the  
cave of old Silence  
Into the light of the Sun — then too that myth  
was her work,  
Sprung of her soul into flesh again dipping its  
fiery essence,  
Still recollecting the forms which it created of  
old.  
O my brave maiden, now tell it, for thou wert  
the singer heroic  
Of the glorious deed, hung like a lamp in the  
sky  
Of far-off antiquity — lamp that illumines all the  
ages —  
Yet with thy praises festooned, now a new glory  
it shines.  
In the olden republican times I can think thee a  
poet  
Framing fierce fables antique which first to-day  
I have heard  
Told with the glow enkindled alone of the primal  
conception,  
Firing the soul of the bard when he deep  
destinies sings.

## 5. An Old Legend Re-incarnated.

Tell me a story — a story that touches thy heart,  
    Roman maiden,  
For the atmosphere sweet, which is surround-  
    ing thy thoughts,  
Filling the hours with visions of youth and ten-  
    derest passion,  
I would breathe in by day, then I would dream  
    in by night.  
From thy fancy let me but charm thy favorite  
    legend,  
For I long to descend into the fountain of  
    youth  
And to drink of its bright limpid waters just as  
    they gurgle  
From their source, thy heart. There I may  
    see deep below  
Images floating transparently chased in pearls of  
    mild beauty,  
Which reveal to the eye lands that are filled  
    with thy dreams.  
Rare is the flower of speech, just tipped with the  
    dew of young honey,  
Which distills drop by drop from the sweet  
    lips of the maid ;  
Rare is the vision unrolled in the fount to the  
    look of the drinker,  
Who would fain swoon away into that world of  
    bright forms.

Rose-bud of Rome, here growing in fondness  
over the ruins,  
Which still furnish the soil whence thy fair  
bloom sucks its life,  
Whose dark roots sink down to the temples of  
Gods and of Heroes,  
And to the Present upbreathes fragrance that  
comes of the Past —  
Tell me a story while yet I can see by the glim-  
mer of sunlight  
Thy swift flashes of red wreathing thy lilies  
with love,  
Modesty's sky blushed through by gleams of  
innocent passion,  
Heralds announcing thy tale truthful to nature  
yet pure.  
“ In the time of old Rome there lived a beautiful  
lady,  
And in old Rome, you must know, every lady  
was fair,  
Now they are few, and none of them are so fair  
as the ancient ;  
Noble this lady was too, bearing a name that I  
love ;  
She was called Cornelia of Rome, 'tis the name  
of my mother,  
And has remained in our house long as a family  
name  
For the women, since we have come of her  
blood — we know it —

In a straight line we can trace out of old Rome  
our descent.

Well, this noble Cornelia, this beautiful lady I  
speak of,

Also a dear mother was, mother of beautiful  
boys,

Two of them; no such beautiful boys can be  
found in the city

Now, for the city has changed, people within  
it have changed.

But how proud she felt as the mother of beautiful  
children!

Roman boys, perchance soon to be great men  
of Rome.

Think all the day, and dream all the night of two  
pretty children,

This Cornelia did, proud Roman matron of  
old.

For they were boys—and not for a momeut  
could she stop thinking

What they were to become when they had  
grown to be men.

Once some fine Roman ladies came to visit  
Cornelia,

Finest dresses they wore, jewels and gems set  
in gold;

They besought her that day to put on her cost-  
liest garments,

Covered with rubies and pearls — stars cannot  
twinkle so bright

On the clear sky above — and then they begged  
and they coaxed her  
With them to sweep down the street showing  
her beauty and wealth.  
Oh, methinks these dames of old Rome were  
surely the mothers  
Of our women to-day, so much alike do they  
seem ;  
Often I notice that thistles and weeds spring up  
without planting,  
While the harvest dies out under husbandman's  
hand.  
But what answered Cornelia the Roman ? These  
are my jewels,  
Pointing down at her babes, who were asleep  
in their crib.  
O the beautiful children — two boys ! methinks  
I behold them  
Lying with thick little arms folded in sweetest  
embrace.  
Think what it means — two boys ! when grown  
to be men they are Romans !  
Senators greater than Kings, conquerors, too,  
of the world.”  
So spake the maiden, till speech seemed lost in  
the flow of her fancies  
Floating away on a sea known to her vision  
alone.  
Still O maiden, I mark in thy words the mother  
of heroes,

And thy kinship is traced not in the lines of descent,  
But in the spirit, more truly kindred than blood or the body,  
Stamping its seal on the act, clearer to read than the print.  
Deep is thy rapture to image thyself the mother of Great Men  
Born to rule the whole world, as from Olympus the Gods.  
Yes, thyself thou hast named, hereafter hold fast to thy title,  
Young Cornelia of Rome, mother of possible sons  
Like the old Romans, men of the mightiest will and of action :  
Thy great son, may he make Italy great as of yore !

#### 6. Tiber and Arethusa.

Swollen and angry seems always the brow of the God of the Tiber ;  
He has a right to his wrath if we but think of his lot ;  
All the drains of the earth and streams that wash alien countries  
Have been gathered by time into the torrent of Rome,  
To be sent down her channel afar to the limitless ocean,

Which doth lave every land round the new  
shores of the world.

But now behold this fountain of joy that runs  
through the city !

Greek Arethusa has flowed under the sea into  
Rome.

Where the Greek rivulet pours its transparency  
into the river,

The stern frown of the God drops into dimples  
of joy ;

Thither I love to saunter at random along the  
bright border,

Till the clear waters be lost, lost in the turbu-  
lent wave.

#### 7. The Two Muses.

Two fair daughters were born to the ages,  
Camena and Musa;

Giantess grew up the one, swaying all men to  
her will,

While the sweet sister has always remained a  
blooming young maiden,

Sixteen summers she has ; 'tis the old story of  
love.

#### 8. The Two Streams.

Clear are thy fountains, O Hellas, as out of the  
hillsides they gurgle,

And in a crystalline stream flow through the  
valley and mead ;

Small are thy rills, oft leaping along in channels  
of marble,  
Often reposing in grots under cool arches o'er-  
mossed.  
Larger than they, but turbid, is ever the rush of  
the Tiber;  
Give me to drink of thy brook, small but  
transparent and glad.

9. Looking Backward.

Where do these temples look with their faces of  
pillars and friezes?  
Where do these monuments point, with a set  
finger of stone?  
Where do these statues that fill with their forms  
vast halls and museums  
Turn when they whisper of home, hinting of  
destiny rude?  
Where but to Hellas, the happy abode of their  
freedom,  
Ere the Roman had come, thralling their  
beauty to use.

10. The Sigh of Hellas in Rome.

Rome, I have fed with peaceful delight on thy  
honey delicious,  
Daily I open new hives built in the ages of  
yore.

Dead long since are the bees that gathered these  
stores of enjoyment,

Heliconian swarm, reared on the flowers of  
Greece.

Still the sweet structure of cunning instinctive is  
not as they left it,

Broken and scattered and stained are all the  
fragments so fair.

Yet each fragment distills a clear liquid infused  
with the nectar

That long since down to earth fell from the  
tables of Gods.

Roaming amid ancient forests of pillars, now  
fallen and broken,

E'en from the fissures and breaks I have been  
catching the drops.

What delight at the draught went throbbing in  
waves through the body?

Was it the mildness of art, or the mad wild-  
ness of wine?

Ah ! this moment there follows the surfeit of  
gratification,

Ruddy enjoyment now palls, Rome can no  
longer delight.

List ! there is aught in these marbles that hints  
of an ancient estrangement,

A low sigh may be heard out of the heart of  
the stones :

“ We are but captives taken to grace a con-  
queror’s triumph,

Out of a beautiful world which we had made  
for ourselves;  
Here our lot is to seem and to serve in the house  
of a master,  
O for our Hellas once more; O for our  
freedom and home.”

## II. Art.

Art must be a true worship of Gods, not merely  
enjoyment,  
Goddess is the high Muse, scorns to be used  
for desire;  
Dizened with jewels of strangers, her honor at  
once is suspected,  
Clothed she must be in the robe which she, a  
Goddess, hath woven.

## I2. The Great Fall.

Speak, O Quirites, and tell me, ye Cæsars, your  
fall, your great downfall,  
When into ruin the world sank with the Gods  
in the crash;  
Read me your doom, ye Senators, Censors and  
great Imperators,  
Kings in your palace once, some of you Gods  
in your fanes;  
What did ye do, maimed rows of sad marble, to  
call up this judgment?

Misery broods in your pomp, beggary breeds  
in your homes.

But what saddens me more than all the long  
pang of your city,

Hellas, the fair, I behold lying in rags on the  
street:

Her I now see as the beautiful slave that served  
in the temple

Built by the conqueror Rome, with all the  
peoples of earth;

Free no longer and pure, she lost her heavenly  
figure,

Though she was decked with the wealth ta'en  
from the spoils of a world.

Forms and abodes of the Gods, she, a slave, no  
longer created,

Once a Goddess herself, sprung of Olympian  
seed.

### 13. A Translation.

I am everything ancient and modern at Rome,  
the eternal !

Here on this spot where is all, how can I help  
being all —

Past and future, the high and the low, the good  
and the bad, too ?

Lawgiver Roman I come weighing the law of  
the world ;

Conqueror lordly of Britain and Gaul, I triumph  
in wine-shops ;

Orator ancient at times, thunder I Cicero's phrase.

But I am now the new schoolmaster, old Latin poets construing

Once again in my school; ye are my schoolboys, O friends.

Come, gay Horace with amorous Ovid, Catullus, Propertius,

All of your verse I shall turn into plain English at once:

“Captive Greece was the beautiful mistress kept by Quirinus,

Throned she lay in his heart, spurned from his morals and law;

Thou wilt know the result. She debauched both his heart and his morals,

While with her honor's loss, lost was her beauty divine.”

#### 14. An Oration.

Conscript Fathers of Rome and of Time, a speech in your Senate,

One short speech—that is all—now I am ready to make—

Not the plentiful silvery stream of the Orator Roman,

But brief barbarous words shouting the cry of these stones:

Not enough, O Rome, to enslave the whole  
world to thy surfeit—  
Thou hast enslaved the Gods, slave thou art  
now to thyself.

## 15. Premonition.

Now I must leave thee, O Rome ; there is a loud  
clock in the city,  
Tolling the limit of time when the sad guest  
must depart ;  
Louder still I can hear the stroke of the clock in  
my bosom,  
Smiting with hammer of steel : now I must  
leave thee, O Rome.

## 16. The Two Guides.

As thy virtue, O Latium, is mad, so thy pleasure  
is beastly ;  
Hellas enjoys and refrains sweetly together in  
one.  
Thou art, O Roman, either too good or too bad  
for my journey ;  
Thou, O Greek, art a man, come, let me take  
thee along.

## 17. The Two Cities.

Looking before me I see happy banks in the  
skies built of sunshine,

Looking behind me I feel clouds in mine eyes  
full of rain ;  
Why are the heavens there full of joy, and here  
full of sorrow ?  
Rome I am leaving behind, Athens is lying  
before.

## 18. Retrorsus.

Now, O Rome, is my path where point thy  
fingers of marble,  
Where thy speaking stones say is the land of  
their birth,  
Where is the home of the forms that uphold thy  
arches triumphal,  
Home of the urns of thy dead, wreathed with  
fresh flowers of life.  
'Tis the secret command of thy heart, O city  
imperial,  
Now the fountain to find whence is derived  
the stream.

## 19. Prorsus.

Swinging on high between two visions seemeth  
my journey,  
As the pendulum swings back from a tick to a  
tick ;  
And on the clock of the world I am marking the  
weightiest moments,

As I sweep to and fro through the dead ages  
embalmed.

Substance fades to a dream, but the dream soon  
hardens to substance,  
Huge Coliseum recedes, Parthenon rises to  
view.



**PART SECOND.**

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*Epigrammatic Voyage.*

Could I but give to thee half the delight in reading these verses

That I feel as I make all of them leap to my beat,

Surely our friendship would be in this book forever recorded :

Vain is the hope, thou hast too many other good books.

Still I shall write it, doing my best to please two persons,

Namely, myself and the God ; hardly the third I expect.

ROMÆ, KAL., Oct. 1878.

## Book First.

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### Italy.

#### 1.

*On the Sea.*

All the sea was a smile and a twinkle was every  
wavelet,

Cheerily flew the white sails big with the favor-  
ing breeze,

And the ship — the new ship — bore away to the  
goal of her voyage,

While the steersman in sport dallied with water  
and wind.

Merrily under the touch of the rudder is rocking  
the vessel,

Rising a little above, falling a little below,

Eager to dance on the sea with the billow and  
romp with the sunbeam,  
While the wares in the hold safely to haven it  
brings.  
Epigrams, rise! your voyage begins, now rock  
with the vessel,  
One with the sway of the ship, one with the  
storm and the calm.  
Be ye the soul at the helm, and be ye the voice  
of the helmsman,  
Be ye the sea and the land, be ye the present  
and past.

## 2

Festive processions of Nereids drawn by silver-  
reined dolphins  
Wind in the curls of the sea, curled by soft  
Zephyrus' hand;  
Shell-blowing Tritons rise up and announce the  
approach of Poseidon,  
Then sink under the tide to the hoarse note of  
their shells.  
Look o'er waves to the line of yon blue, 'tis a  
festival splendid,  
Thousand of deities hoar float round Poseidon's  
moist car.

## 3

Royal Poseidon has harnessed his horses to his  
blue chariot,

White flow their manes in the wind as they are  
racing to shore;  
On the surface they play with the infinite move-  
ment of water,  
Dancing the dance of the sea over the caroling  
waves;  
But as soon as they brush underneath on the  
strand's pebbly bottom,  
Broken and foaming they fall headlong against  
the hard beach.  
Noble thy steeds, O Poseidon, and ever the more  
to be valued,  
That no feet they possess which can step out of  
the sea.

## 4

Roguish, light-winged epigram, boldest rover  
of Hellas,  
Robber too of her sweets, lurking on all of  
her ways,  
Little pirate on poesy's ocean, now I have  
caught thee;  
Give me some of thy spoils else I shall crush  
thee to prose.

## 5

Wavelet, why dost thou seek to walk out of thy  
kingdom of waters,  
Where is woven thy robe out of the blue  
skies?—

Nereid, why art thou trying to leave the gay  
train of Poseidon,  
Losing thy beautiful form at the first touch of  
the land,  
Thou wilt but flounder a moment among the  
rough stones of the shallows,  
Watery film are thy hands — they cannot cling  
to the earth.

## 6

The God's trident hath not the sole power to rule  
on the Ocean,  
A fair girdle I saw fondled and kissed by the  
waves ;  
Each of them sought it, lovingly pressed it a  
moment, then lost it ;  
O the great hand of the sea, how it would  
clutch for the prize,  
Trying to hold in its watery grasp that girdle  
inconstant,  
Which through its fingers would slip — vain  
was the task of a God.  
Laughing it swayed to the rise and the fall of  
the refluent bosom  
Sprung of the billowy spume; here Aphrodite  
once rose,  
Here now she rises again from the wave and is  
free of her sea-robe,  
Stands at the helm of the ship, changes its  
course to her spell,

Hanging her zone on the rudder ; I knew it as  
soon as I saw it !

Oft have I seen it on land, plaything of Eros  
her boy.

## 7

Eros, I warn thee, in this epigrammatical voyage  
I shall not take thee along, put up thy arrow  
and bow,

Breathe not thy flattering breath on my words,  
stop caressing my fancies,  
Thou art too much of a boy, I am too much of  
a man.—

But the sly rogue laughs hundreds of sweet little  
epigrams at me,  
Hundreds and hundreds they fly, filling these  
classical skies.

He hath stolen my weapon poetic and turned it  
against me,  
As from the War-God he stole buckler and  
spear and the sword.

## 8

Epigram, tell me, gay charmer, the source of thy  
wonderful genius ;

Turn now thy verse on thyself, thee by thy  
light let me see,

And in a distich behold thy true face by double  
reflection ;

Rise, Hexameter, there ; follow, Pentameter,  
too.—

“ Curious voyager, why break open my virginal  
treasure ?

Touch but my two little lips making a mouth  
for thy kiss.”

9

Thou must behold in the sea not merely the sea  
but the image

Mirrored down in the deep, changing to forms  
of the Gods ;

Water, as water, is always insipid, without its  
reflection —

The fair Nymph in the brook, Nereid under the  
sea.

But if no Deity thou canst behold in the rill or  
the ocean,

Peer once more in its glass, there thou beholdest  
thy face.

10

Epigrams scatter I over my page like the shells  
of the mussel

Which on the bottom lie strown under the  
rollicking waves ;

Reader, be thou my pearl diver, valiantly plunge  
in the waters,

Say thy prayers first, ere thou sink down to the  
depths ;

Then will a beautiful Nereid lay on thy finger a mussel;

Raise it and crack it; perchance hid in the shell is a pearl.

## 11

Epigram, speed thee, be a little more epigrammatic,

In but a distich's sweet kiss press me thy two tiny lips.

## 12

Water I saw once thrown on the sunshine in order to quench it;

All of the water was spilled, but the bright sunshine remained.

## 13

At a bright coal of fire a wasp grew angry — he stung it;

His fine stinger was clipped, but the coal glowed as before.

## 14

Whither, O whither, my frolicsome boat, is the flight of thy swan-wings?

Daringly enter this stream pouring down into the sea,

Pouring down into the world through the gate of the past to the future;

Narrow thy course to its banks, wind with its  
turns through the plain,  
Till we reach in our voyage the highest Olympian  
sources,  
Sailing on sea and on land, sailing up mount-  
ain and sky.

## 15

*In the Olives.*

As I passed underneath, there fell the gray leaf  
of the Olive,  
Pricked with a needle of frost, 'twas the first  
leaf of the fall ;  
Gently it lodged in my hair, and found too a  
frosted companion,  
Which had there stealthily crept, stealing  
along with the years.  
There lay the leaf, and it stroked me as if the  
soft hand of Minerva,  
Her sweet benison gave out of her favorite  
tree.

## 16

Why has the frolicsome Olive been called the  
tree of sage Pallas?  
See the green branches of youth gleam with  
the silver of age,  
Poesy's juvenile buoyancy blent with grave  
wisdom's reflection ;  
On each leaflet behold choruses danced to the  
sun.

Then look up at the fruit on the twigs suspended by handfuls,  
Such is the Goddess' gift; take it, 'tis thine,  
if thou canst.

## 17

Under the Olives I wander, silvery green is the sparkle,  
Dancing about on the leaves with the new rays of the sun;  
Fruit is just turning dark to mature along with the season,  
While the skipping gay hours diadems weave on the hills.  
Crude and green on the branches is hanging still many a berry,  
But this sun in the south quickly will ripen them all.  
Long I loiter delighted, though always I sigh for the harvest,  
As I look up at the limbs laden with layers of fruit.  
Tarry until the green leaf of the tree-top is struck by the hoar-frost,  
Not an olive matures till it be smitten by fate.

## 18

A slight frost often touches before the harvest will ripen,  
The crude growth of the tree softens to mildness and strength;

From the foliage words of the Goddess are  
silently droppiug,  
“Gather the fruit, O man; hasten, thy harvest  
has come.”

## 19

*On the Mountain.*

I can tell you a secret about the ascent of this  
mountain;

If from below you look up, why, it appears  
but one top

Which you can easily reach, but it is a long  
series of summits,

Each one struggling above with pleasant val-  
leys between.

When you have reached one summit, there breaks  
overhead yet another;

Thus you laboriously climb, viewing a height  
ever new.

Loiter, I pray, at times in the vales, in the folds  
of the mountain,

There the flowers will bloom, there too the  
shepherd will pipe.

## 20

Crystalline folds, as they lie on the form of the  
Goddess, thou knowest,

They can be seen on this mount resting serene  
in the sun;

What are the dingles and dells that roll in  
millions of wavelets  
Down the sides of the slope, but the mild flow  
of the folds?

## 21

What a wild symphony heard I to-day on the top  
of the mountain!

Foremost came the small bee piping soprano  
above,  
Then the big bumble bee slowly was droning his  
note, the deep basso,  
While the fly on his flute played a soft alto  
between.

Thousands of fiddlers were daintily touching the  
strings of their fiddles,  
Large and little were there, tuned to the key-  
note of clime.

All were at work on the flowers, not thinking  
they made any music,  
Still their work ever moved to the sweet music  
they made.

## 22

Stop and listen! here is the mead and there is  
the mountain;  
Soft tones echo from both if thou wilt hear  
them alone;  
Give up thy breath for a moment! catch the new  
voice of all nature!

Thou must not think of thyself, if thou wilt  
hear what it says.

One deep note it becomes now, swelling above  
the whole landscape,  
But thou wilt lose it at once, if to repeat it  
thou seek.

## 23

Loftily over the brow of the mountain is hanging  
a ruin,  
Ready to tumble beneath, seeming to sink in  
itself ;  
Once it was peopled with monks, but now it is  
held by the Dryads,  
Who have re-taken their home, whence they  
were driven of old,  
Now I can enter the cloister, a member become  
of their order;  
Bring me a hair skin of moss, wreath me a  
cowl of green leaves,  
Clothe me, O Nymphs, in embraces, hang on my  
lips your caresses,  
That by your rites I become here in my cell a  
good monk.  
How I can sing in these ruins — let them fall  
inside and outside;  
On this fresh cloistered moss how I can sleep —  
let it grow.

## 24

A dark ghost was flitting alone through the walls  
of the cloister,  
Mid the ruins it sped, vanishing soon into  
mist;  
What could it be? The last monk. The fountain  
there laughed more clearly  
As the Nymphs of the stream saw the lone  
specter depart.

## 25

Here I rest in the far-glancing, sun-roofed temple  
of Phœbus  
Spreading over my head through to the ends  
of the world;  
Far below in the vale is the olive-green floor  
of the tree-tops,  
Pillars are mountains of stone holding the  
golden round roof.  
Such my Pantheon is now, where all of the Gods  
are assembled,  
Holding a festival free, in an Hellenic high  
strain.

## 26

With his fingers of gold now softly Apollo is  
feeling  
Over the breasts of the hills, drowsy as yet in  
the dawn;

Like a fond waking husband he turns with a face  
full of splendor  
To his sweet spouse, the earth, golden caresses  
to reach.  
There she is lying with bosom burst out in the  
glow of his glances,  
She, with a smile half asleep, gives the response  
to his touch.

27

Here is the flower, the holder of honey, trans-  
mute it to verses;  
Six white leaves form a star, looking above at  
the stars,  
Often diverse is the size, and varied is often the  
color,  
Purple at times it becomes, vanishing faintly  
to blue.  
Inside golden it is, where shines too the bees'  
sweet treasure;  
Pluck it up from the ground, plant it anew in  
thy soil.

28

Small is the mountain, but of its sweets thou  
canst gather a mouthful,  
Or a hiveful perchance, if thou art truly a bee.

29

*In the Vineyard.*

A stray bird came to Delphi and pecked at the  
grapes of the vineyard,

Drunken with juice he began strangely to sing  
a new song.

## 30

Epigrams always are hanging over my walks in  
long clusters,

Attic grapes they are, full of the juice of the  
clime;

On the path of my journey I roam through antique  
vineyards,

Many a bunch I receive plucked by the grow-  
er's own hand.

All are not equally good in the bunch, some are  
small, some are green still,

Pick them off one by one noting their various  
worth.

Every grape must be crushed with a thought, not  
stupidly swallowed,

If thou wilt feel the light glow lit in the grape  
by the God.

## 31

Drops that were craftily hid in the clusters now  
gather in gushes,

Break from within the soft pulp out of the  
heart of the grape;

Long has the droplet been ripening there in the  
joy of the sunshine,

Earth, air, heaven above, all have been giving  
their aid;

And the old vine-dresser many a year has been  
training the branches  
Just for thy rapture to-day; here thou hast all  
of their gifts.

## 32

Wouldst thou know the sweetest, sublimest  
lesson of Nature,  
What the Poet repeats in the keen flash of his  
words,  
What Divinity utters gliding a-down from  
Olympus,  
What, too, Philosophy says in the deep cast  
of her brow?  
This it is: from the soil sips each little mouth of  
the rootlet,  
From the rootlet sips uninterrupted the grape,  
And from the grape sips man the immortal, the  
top of creation,  
Dowered with reason divine, like in his form  
to a God.  
Rootlets are tipplers, intoxicated are all of the  
clusters,  
Bacchanals too are the vines, crooked and reel-  
ing around.  
See them rise from the earth to a deity, wreath-  
ing his body,  
Gently diffusing their juice; note thy example,  
O man.

## 33

The coy blink of this virginal wine is my treasure  
forever,  
Maiden sincere as the word which she inspireth  
in hearts;  
Let me now touch, ere Time slip away, my lips  
to the virgin,  
Who doth smile in the glass brimming im-  
maculate love.

## 34

Mortal the eye is and so must remain, still it  
sees things immortal;  
High Bacchic pomp it beholds in but a cup of  
the wine;  
And in each drop uplifted to lips from the fount  
of Castalia,  
Bathers divine it can see sporting white limbs  
in a stream.

## 35

*By the Way.*

One, O Greek, was thine eye and thy soul, in  
a harmony splendid  
Both together were blent that they no parting  
allowed;  
Sight was insight to thee, and thought a trans-  
spicuous image,  
Thou didst see with thy soul, soul too beheld  
with thy glance;

In thine eye as a mirror were seen all the colors  
of nature,  
Calmly reflecting therein depths that belong to  
the soul.

## 36

Poesy cannot behold her own flight to poetical  
regions,  
When she looks back at her wings, then is she  
fallen to earth;  
She must soar to the goal in her rapture, not  
think she is soaring,  
Fair she also must be,— let her not think she  
is fair.

## 37

Why so modest, my dear little epigram, poesy's  
sweet-heart?  
I would thy lover be now, lisp me thy tender-  
est word.—  
Voyager, I cannot say I am modest, because I  
am modest,  
If I could tell what I am, then thou wouldest  
love me no more.

## 38

Fond epigrammatist, thou art my lover, be not  
my betrayer;  
Leave me my virginal charm, else thou wilt  
spurn me thyself,

Seek not my maidenly mystery wooing the love  
of thy verses,  
Else not a line, not a word can I impress on  
thy lips.

39

Placid thy speech, O Homer, transparent it runs  
like the brooklet,  
Under the surface we see Nymphs in the fount  
of thy words,  
Freely disporting their forms, and revealing  
divinest perfections ;  
Now with the brooklet behold always the  
Nymph underneath.

40

To a nest of bowls I am fain to liken these poems,  
Outside and inside are bowls, each can be seen  
in the one ;  
And yet each is itself altogether, cannot be  
another,  
Thou must the inside discern, if thou the  
outside wilt know.

41

Hercules had two fathers, a mortal and an im-  
mortal,  
So had Theseus bold, Attica's pride and  
defense:  
So has every Hero filled with mighty endeavor,

He is the child of some God stealthily gliding  
to earth.

## 42

Why is the father of Heroes often the weakest  
of mortals?

Why so seldom the sons have the endowment  
divine?

Some invisible strand winds through our domestic  
relation,

Which reaching up to the Gods, draws a  
Promethean spark.

Two are the households of man and his kinship  
ever is double,

To an Olympian hearth, though here below, he  
belongs.

## 43

Wake not love in these epigrams, be a little more  
careful,

Leave thy caresses, O Muse, which thou dost  
drop in my lines,

Well thou knowest my weakness, and laughest a  
verse at my purpose:

A suspicion I have that thou wilt waylay my  
words,

Catching them up from my lips before I can  
train them to duty;

In these epigrams, Muse, wake not my love  
with thy kiss.

## 44

Art thou sick? Then go out and list to the little  
musicians,  
That by the hundreds now pipe under the half-  
burstèd buds;  
Hark to the strain! they turn each tree-top into  
a fountain  
Welling melodious jets high in the air over-  
head.  
Find out what they are singing as they now  
greet the new spring-time,  
That will heal thee, my friend; it is great  
Nature's first balm.

## 45

Guess me the maiden I love, the maiden most  
beautiful, dearest,  
Who hath never yet known that she is beauti-  
ful, dear;  
But if she turns and looks for a moment into her  
mirror,  
At her glance her own face vanishes out of the  
glass;  
I can stand all the day and gaze at her beautiful  
image,  
If she herself takes a peep, then she is fled  
from the world.

## 46

Out of the sky came an eagle, it dived to the earth for a weasel,  
 Then it soared to the clouds rapidly, passed out of sight  
 Into ethereal regions ; soon from its eerie in cloud-land  
 Down it fell dead at my feet, with its heart's blood on its breast.  
 What had become of the weasel ? From its high-soaring victim  
 I could see it run off to its old hole in the rocks.

## 47

Voyage you call it : But tell me where are the sea and the vessel ?  
 Under my feet is no plank, points of the compass are lost.—  
 Epigrams, friend, are the whole of my craft, now a ship, now a shallop,  
 Thoughts are the timbers inlaid, fancies the fluttering sails,  
 And I float my epigrammatical fleet on an ocean Laughingly yielding its wave to the soft breath of the Gods.

## 48

Reader, I deem thou already hast quit me thy voyager epigrammatic,

Fallen perchance by the way, quite overcome  
by fatigue;  
Still I often shall hopefully call thee as if thou  
wert present,  
With me a friend I must think, though there  
be really none.

49

*Naples.*

On the strand overborne by the frown of high  
Posilupo  
Stood I and looked to the sea praying Poseidon  
to rise ;  
Soon came the God at my call in his chariot over  
the surface,  
Through the bright waves of the sea cutting a  
track of quick light.  
But as he neared the low shore and touched the  
firm sand of the shallows,  
Horses and chariot and God broke into foam at  
my feet.

50

In the soft arms of Poseidon is the dear home of  
the sea-nymphs ;  
Do not decoy them away from their abode to  
the land ;  
Dost thou not see that no feet they possess to  
rise up from the waters ?  
Watch them far out in the main, sporting  
bright shapes in the sun.

## 51

Naples, true is thy title to-day, thou art still the  
new city,  
Old thou never hast grown, though on thy head  
lie the years  
By the thousand. Neapolis, Grecian youth is thy  
dower,  
Which the old Gods to thee left in their  
retreat from the world.

## 52

On a hill whose summit looks over the sea, and  
whose forehead  
With fresh laurels is wreathed, flapping their  
leaves to the breeze  
Is embalmed the Latin Bee mid the bloom of his  
flowers,  
Whence such sweetness he sucked that we  
must seek him to-day.

## 53

Here are the vines introduced long ago from the  
vineland of Hellas,  
Here amid their embrace Virgil of Rome lies  
entombed,  
Who with Italian winepress extracted their deli-  
cate juices ;  
May he forever repose in the Greek fragrance  
inurned !

## 54

Grapes of sweet flavor I tasted to-day from the  
Mantuan vineyard,  
Which transplanted had been from their  
Hellenic abode;  
Sweet were the Mantuan grapes, yet sweeter  
the thought of that vineyard  
Whence they were taken of old, whither the  
moments all throng.

## 55

Watch the gay festival pouring a torrent of joy  
down the Corso;  
Hark! what thunder is that rumbling beyond  
the clear sky!  
Flower-girls, lazaroni, dancers, pulcinelli—  
Stop! did the earth underneath quake to the  
beat of your feet?—  
Pleasure's happiest poor-house, stronghold of  
King Macaroni—  
See! a red flash in the sky glares on the city  
and land;  
Look off yonder, a dark bloody hand with thou-  
sands of fingers  
Reaches up from a peak, clutching at Gods in  
the skies.  
There stretched over this city now full of the joy  
of existence,

Hovers destiny's hand, threatens as in the old world.

56

The Neapolitan butterfly danced on the heights of St. Elmo,  
Spreading bright wings to the sun, drawing the look by its tints ;  
When it lit on a flower, I slipped up slyly to catch it,  
But from my fingers it flew ere they could close on its wings.

57

What a story is read to thee daily, O beautiful Naples !  
'Tis the Pompeian tale lying just under thine eye,  
Written in ruins whose letters are lines of tenantless houses,  
Alphabet mighty of Fate carved on this hill long ago.  
'Tis the old story of Hellas, the story prophetic of Nature,  
Thy new story may lie writ in this ruin, beware.

58

*Pompeii.*

Language of Destiny, lettered in furious flames on this mountain,

Was not then taught in the school, still it is  
hardly taught there.  
Reader, if not yet asleep in the rise and the fall  
of this voyage,  
Open thy senses afresh, now we are going to  
spell;  
Wake! 'tis the hour to learn an alphabetical  
lesson  
In this wonderful book; here is the Pompeian  
school.

## 59

Ages on ages were working in Rome the mighty  
destruction,  
Which Pompeii befell in but a moment of  
Time;  
Rome, too, had her Vesuvins gathering fire and  
forces,  
Through her duration is strown what is here  
pressed to a point.  
There it is written in large, and here it is written  
in little,  
In the fate of this town might she have read  
her own fate.  
But she could not decipher the words of the  
flaming inscription,  
Which revealed her own deeds turned into  
symbols of fire.

## 60

O Pompeii, what shall we say to thee rising from  
ashes  
With thy body scarce seared, oft with the hue  
on thy cheek?  
Thou hast ages on ages of death entombed in  
thy features,  
Still to-day thou art up, in thy old seat on the  
hill.  
Many believe hereafter will be resurrection of  
body,  
But of the old buried town, look, resurrection  
has come.

## 61

Wander at random through vacant doors and  
paths of the city,  
Lose thyself in the net woven of houses and  
streets,  
Till thy brain becomes Pompeii alive in its  
mazes ;  
Dreams have fled out the way, now thou art  
in the old world.

## 62

From these stones worn deep by the tread of old  
generations  
Premonitions arise strangely suggesting our  
lot;

Man is mixed of a moment and of eternal duration,  
So say thousands of feet stamping their trace  
in the rock.

## 63

Here you enter the Pompeian wineshop and ask  
for refreshment,  
Quickly the waiter responds, dips with a long-  
handled cup  
Through the small neck of this wine-jar piercing  
the slab of the counter;  
Cool and pure is the bowl, crown it again with  
a wreath.

## 64 .

This is the temple of Venus where once she was  
fervently worshiped,  
Beauty in figure divine as she arose from the  
sea ;  
Fain would I too be a worshiper, enter her  
temple this morning,  
Move mid her pillared grove to the fair idol  
within.

## 65

As we pass down the street, there opens the door  
of a mansion ;  
Through its interior peep, swiftly the vision is  
borne  
On the flight of the long colonnade to the green  
of the garden,

Whither the columns are winged, but can not  
fly to the goal.  
Whose can it be? Thy dwelling, O Pansa;  
pardon intruders;  
Long art thou absent from home; now it is  
ours, here we are.

## 66

When I beheld thee, Medeia, I seemed to behold  
the Greek woman  
Painted by artist of old from a strong face in  
his heart;  
Her I now seek for in body, until I shall find the  
same features  
And imprint them within — image remains not  
a shade.  
This is the fruit of the journey: to see in the  
mirror Hellenic  
What the world once was, what is now fairest  
and best.

## 67

O the maiden Hellenic, each house in the town  
hath her picture!  
Soon she comes out of the door, tripping the  
pavement along.  
Softly the waves of her garment roll down all the  
lines of her body,  
And the rich crown of her hair is by the  
Graces entwined.

Out of the folds of her robe there rises sweet  
fragrance of movement,  
As the bare forearm she lifts daintily from the  
white plies.  
What can you do now but follow? What I pray  
are you here for?  
At the turn of some street, quick, you may  
glance in her face.

## 68

O fair boy, around this urn where thy ashes are  
resting,  
Nymphs are dancing in glee to the mad flute of  
the Faun;  
Joyous was ever thy life, each day was the bloom  
of a banquet,  
Through this gate of the tomb on thou dost  
leap with a laugh.  
Still with this rout of merry musicians and dan-  
cers around thee,  
E'en old Hades will smile, all his dark grot  
will be lit.

## 69

This is the Pompeian school-house where an-  
ciently swayed a grim master,  
Open still is the school, enter and study its  
book.  
Scholars have come and are gone, to-day they  
are coming and going,

Pedagogue too can be seen, if thou wilt glance  
at thy side.

What is here taught do you ask? The reading  
and writing of ruin;  
But what is learned from old bricks? Epi-  
grams, spell him the word.

## 70

Many an image doth lie in thy ashen embrace,  
Pompeii;  
Statues repose there unviewed, till they awake  
in the sun;  
Ancient legend, writ on thy walls, is born into  
color,  
Gems lie there in the earth, cut with the lines  
of a Grace.  
But of all of the images that lie hid in thy bosom,  
Greatest by far is thyself — Destiny's image  
art thou.

## 71

Destiny's workings within our world thou deeply  
dost image,  
We thy affliction lament, though we are blessed  
by thy pain;  
For the Gods have done thee a wrong, but man-  
kind a blessing,  
Suffering smiteth the part that the great whole  
may be saved.

## 72

Destiny smiteth the oue with her scepter, that all  
be forever ;  
Slayeth this moment of Time, that so Eternity  
be ;  
Evil she is to the moment, but to eternity holy ;  
Wrecked she Pompeii then, hence thou be-  
holdest it now.

## 73

*Vesuvius.*

Who is the giant now under Vesuvius near merry  
Naples ?  
Dead he is not but he breathes heavily as in a  
dream.  
What is he dreaming ? Dangerous visions of fire  
and sulphur ,  
As in some passion he rolls, turning from this  
side to that.  
Dead he is not, but alive, though just at this  
moment he sleepeth ;  
What will he do when he wakes ? See the  
scarred face of the mount.

## 74

O Vesuvius, thy torn lips loudly speak a new  
language ,  
Hot are thy thunderous words, breaking out  
deep from thy heart,

Orator ancient, red is the stream of thy speech  
 to thy people,  
 Dark and fatal thy breath furiously winds to  
 the Gods.  
 What art thou saying, O Titan? Thy mighty  
 foreboding interpret?  
 Aught there is underneath wrecking the world  
 overhead.

## 75

Hesiod, seeing Vesuvius we have to see with  
 thy vision,  
 And to think with thy thought all this upheaval  
 of fire;  
 'Tis thy song of the battle between the new Gods  
 and the Titans,  
 Clear thy hint underneath flows in thy speech  
 as a rill.  
 Look! our pathway Hellenic has wandered now  
 into thy poem,  
 Here is the work of the earth, there is the  
 word of the bard.

## 76

Here a peep thou canst take deep into the smithy  
 of Cyclops,  
 For the King of the skies see now the thunder-  
 bolts forged  
 Which he hurls in his wrath at the wicked. Then  
 look down the mountain,

Thou wilt behold all his foes — pierced they  
lie strown with the shafts.

## 77

Titans I saw whose limbs had been scattered all  
over the mountain,  
Writhing still they lay skewered by bolts of  
high Jove;  
There with bundles of limbs wound together fell  
huge Hundred-Handed;  
Knotted in wrath are his thews, vain is the  
effort to rise.

## 78

Often I wonder if still at some jar in the whirl  
of the ages  
That old war of renown is to be kindled afresh,  
Namely, between the Titans and Jupiter, near to  
Olympus,  
For authority's right over the sons of the  
Earth.  
If so, will the Olympian father again be the  
winner,  
Or on him will the hills this time be piled by  
his foes?

## 79

Jupiter's chain holds him down, but somehow  
he always recovers,  
Often he makes the attempt from his low bed  
to arise.

Battles have no end, though thousands of ages  
asunder,

Titans put down in old Greece, will in new  
Italy rise.

Battles have no end, they have to be fought  
over always,

Victory masks in defeat, could we but see all  
the Gods.

## 80

Fickle Victoria, daughter of Fortune, forever is  
changing

Into the form of her foe, giving her plumage  
to him;

Bright are her feathers, strutting erect all over  
her body,

But each tick of the clock strips a small quill  
from her wings.

She in the happiest moment of triumph begets  
her own victor,

Who will pluck her last plume, leaving her  
naked Defeat.

## 81

Mountain of fire that once overwhelmed the fair  
plain of Pompeii,

Is thy master a God, or a fierce demon in  
wrath?

See thy best and thy worst deed into one action  
united,

Thou by destruction hast saved what else had  
perished by Time.

Provident kindness looks out from the mask of  
wretched disaster,  
Evil and Good in one shape ever are fatally  
blent.

## 82

Agony, printed in Lava, is read from this side of  
the mountain;  
See how thousands of snakes lie intertwined  
round a heart;  
Now they are cold and of stone, though once they  
upreared their long bodies,  
Writhing and hissing through flames in the  
fierce torment of pain;  
Now they are but an image which has been  
moulded by Vulcan  
Deep in the smelted Earth where his dark  
forge is at work.

## 83

Vulcan doth mould in the underworld too, there  
ruled by the Titan,  
Fearful and vast are his shapes poured at  
the Cyclops' dark forge.  
Better I love his works that are made in Olympian workshop,  
Where he dwells with the Gods, filling their  
world with his forms.

Beautiful Venus, his spouse, there wreathes her  
    laugh in his labor,  
Near him the Graces abide, casting their  
    glance in his shop.

## 84

Homely Vulcan, begrimed is thy hand as thou  
    smitest the anvil,  
Channeled through soot on thy front burst the  
    great torrents of sweat,  
Shaggy the hair on thy chest upsprings like  
    brush on the hill-side,  
And among Gods thou art lame, limping about  
    at thy work.  
Still a God thou, whom all men will adore, for  
    thou fixest  
Beautiful forms that would wilt, were they not  
    touched by thy hand.

## 85

Look now back at the blow—Greek deities  
    smote thee, Pompeii,  
For degrading their forms, ravishing wildly  
    their art;  
All their passions thou hast without their  
    Olympian spirit,  
Gods for thy ornaments are, Goddesses, too,  
    for thy lust.

86

O what joy in this epigrammatical voyage, what sorrow !

Out of two threads it is spun, both are in me  
and in thee,

Both are in Rome and Pompeii, the pain and the  
pleasure of being

One with the soul of all time, one with its  
bloom and decay.

Epigrams, come, let us go, we must haste to the  
end of our voyage,

Gladly and sadly we leave, ancient Pompeii,  
farewell.

87

*The Adriatic.*

Roman, colossal thy will, gigantic thy virtue, I  
fear thee ;

But thou canst not enjoy, senses will turn thee  
to swiue.

Why must a man be a demon in hell, or a saint  
in high heaven ?

Why not a man on this Earth, dowered with  
body and soul ?

See, our voyage has strayed to the path of  
Grecian Ulysses,

Who the Sirens could hear, yet of their talous  
beware ;

And the magical draught he could drain of fair  
Circe, the charmer,

Still he remained a true man, could even  
rescue his friends;  
Years upon years he stayed in the bower of  
sweetest Calypso,  
Never there losing himself, never forgetting  
his own.  
He has enjoyment, he has restraint too, both in  
one body,  
Both in one soul he unites, making the music  
of life,  
As it is sung in thy melody ancient, poetical  
Homer,  
Rocking my modern refrain on thy harmoni-  
ous seas.

## 88

Questioner, crafty Ulysses, subtlety made thee a  
skeptic,  
Intellect stirred up the doubt always at word  
of the God ;  
Boldly thou wilt not believe in the promise of  
Goddess Calypso,  
Till she has sworn the great oath by the dark  
river of Hell ;  
And no faith thou shovest at first in the words  
of the Sea Nymph,  
All the Gods thou dost doubt, till they have  
proven themselves.  
Even Pallas, thy mighty protectress, must show  
her own wisdom,

Ere she could win thy belief that thou wert  
come to thy home.

## 89

With thy guidance I too have reached the bright  
land of Pheacians,  
Where Alcinous dwelt, wonderful monarch of  
eld.  
This is his island, upon yon hill overlooking the  
harbor  
He with his counsellors sat, grave with the  
thought of the State.  
Often about the true site of Pheacia the learned  
have striven,  
Playing at blindman's buff in the dark garret  
of lore;  
Everywhere thou must see it, on land, on island,  
on mountain,  
Thou must see it in Greece, anything else is  
not seen.  
Mythic Pheacia, beheld by Ulysses, is actual  
Hellas,  
Imaged beforehand in words dropped from the  
lips of the bard,  
Borne from the thought to the deed by the hero —  
a prophecy splendid  
Of one beautiful world heralding others to be.

## 90

What a wonderful raft was made at the grot of  
Calypso,  
From thy cunning of hand shaping the thought  
of thy brain?  
That was the parent whose progeny now glides  
over the Ocean,  
As the bird in the air, braving Poseidon's fierce  
ire.  
Well may we pardon the wrath of the God  
divinely foreseeing  
How this child of that raft scornfully sports  
on his waves.

## 91

King Alcinous, thy fair palace has had fairer  
offspring!  
Thou art ruling the world still by the beautiful  
form.  
Out of thy mansion majestic was born in a song  
the Greek temple,  
Sentineled round with a choir — Titans  
columnar of stone,  
Bearing forever their burden to hymus of a  
Parian measure,  
Wearing out heaviest Fate to a Pindaric high  
strain.  
Look! those boys of thy garden with tapers are  
moving to statues,

Seeming to walk into stone while they are  
bringing the light;  
Hellas springs out of thy palace all sculptured  
with actions heroic,  
Even the God we discern turning to marble by  
faith.

## 92

Happy if each of these poems may rightly be  
called a small temple!  
First the colonnade pass, then you will come  
to the cell;  
If you enter the deepest recess, you will see the  
fair Goddess,  
And the worshiper, too, bent at her shrine in  
low prayer.

## 93

Poets, if they be poets, are makers, making an  
image  
Which is to stamp old Time into his thousand-  
fold forms,  
And each thing of the senses, each piece of  
indifferent matter,  
Sealed by their touch with a soul, draws a full  
breath of the Gods.  
Thou, old Homer, wert the first builder in Greece,  
the first carver,  
Afterward she could but turn fancies of thine  
into stone;

Architects followed thee, building thy poem aloft  
 into temples,  
 Sculptors followed thee too, thinking in marble  
 thy line.

94

On thy watery way I am sailing, endurer Ulysses,  
 I look down at the waves, there is the scowl  
 of the sea,  
 I look up at the storm-cloud, here it shattered  
 thy vessel,  
 Yonder I see too the height which then encour-  
 aged thy heart.

95

Wise Ulysses, thy work has been done for thyself  
 and the ages,  
 Thou has suffered for us, all who may read of  
 thy pain ;  
 Fighting thy desperate battle with Fate, thou  
 hast fought, too, our battle,  
 Freeing thyself in thy deed, us in thy word  
 thou hast freed.  
 Such is forever the hero, we share the reward of  
 his sorrow,  
 What he has done for himself, is for the rest  
 of the world.  
 When through Hades he goes, he takes us too in  
 his journey,  
 When he to Ithaca comes, we are along, here  
 it is.

## 95

*The Outlook.*

Reader I beg thee to step to my place on this  
ship and look forward;

Gladly to thee I would give all that belongs to  
myself.

Over the light-curling ripples is sportively rock-  
ing the vessel,

On the sea to the East, whither our voyage  
doth tend.

Now we have come to the water once ruled by  
the might of the Sea-god,

Who in his chariot of waves rolled through his  
stormy domains,

Who could rouse up the soul of the Sea with his  
trident or calm it;

Now we have entered the world sunnily built  
of the Myth,

Slowly transmuting itself from the fancy down  
into the senses,

Fables of ages we see drop into Nature's own  
garb.

Look far out on the line of the waves, there rises  
Poseidon,

Heaving the billows suggest presences subtle  
within,

Proteus ancient, daughters of Nereus, thousands  
of daughters,

Triton, who blows on his shell to the deep  
music of seas,  
Old Oceanus, Tethys the mother with floods of  
her children,  
All know their worshiper new, peer from the  
wave and salute.  
It is sunrise, but in front of the sun is a mountain,  
Piled on its top lie the clouds bordered with  
fringes of beams;  
Helios cannot be seen now, still thou wilt know  
it is sunrise,  
Out of an opening deep slants a long armful  
of rays,  
And from many a crevice are breaking great  
fragments of splendor,  
Which I would catch up in speech, turning  
their sheen into verse.  
But O behold ! before thee is resting the sunland  
of Hellas,  
Bursting the mist of the morn over the space  
of the sea,  
Clouds have left but a belt of thin gold bent  
round the horizon,  
Mountains are singing a song from the high  
seats of the Muse ;  
Leap to the shore and gather the world's most  
radiant moment,  
As it here shone in the past, here it is shining  
to-day.

## 96

O Corallion, see yon cloud in the heavens above  
thee:

It is rain or snow — chilled are its drops or  
are warm?

I would like to be rained from the clouds down  
into thy window,

Or a snow-flake be — drop on thy lip and there  
melt.

## 97

Eros, much of my life and my lay to thee I have  
given;

Faithful vassal in verse, I would repose now  
awhile,

Till I write these epigrams. Hear! to these  
wandering children

Would I trauquillity lend, joys of a ramble in  
spring

Mid the quiet of hills, in the golden repose of  
the sunbeams,

Voiced with low murmur of brooks, far from  
thy passionate call.

Later again from thy torch light a fire, a new fire  
in my bosom,

Fiercer than ever before kindle my tongue to  
a flame.

98

Now we are passing from Italy fair into beautiful Hellas;

How shall we cross the gulf over the roar of the waves?

Is it a bridge that I see or is it a phantom of fancy?

Eros has built it, I know — to his sweet guidance I trust.

## Intermezzo.

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Pastorale.

CORYDON.

Where hast thou been, O Tityrus, where hast  
thou been, errant shepherd?  
For thou hast fed on some sweets that in the  
mountain grow wild;  
Fragrantly wreathes thy breath as it subtly per-  
vadeth the cabin.  
Filling with incense the air fit for the home of  
a God;  
And thy words, too, thy words are tenderly laden  
with fragrance,  
As they drop from thy tongue when thou art  
telling thy tale.

Strange that the sound of thy voice is transfused  
with the odor of flowers;  
Tell me, where hast thou been, Tityrus, where  
hast thou been?

#### TITYRUS.

Wandering lone in my journey I came to the  
ridge of Hymettus,  
And ascended the hill thence to look over the  
plain;  
There I lay down to repose in the shade mid the  
herbs and the flowers,  
Whiling the hours away watching the bees at  
their work.  
Thence I followed their flight by the hum of the  
air of the mountain,  
Till I came to their stores which I then sipped  
to my fill;  
And I have learned how to find the sweet treas-  
ures of blooming Hymettus,  
Daily now honey I have, else I am sure I  
should die.

#### CORYDON.

Thither, O Tityrus, let me go with thee, I too  
have a longing  
To behold the fair mount hiding such wealth  
in its rocks.  
Give me to silently breathe of the air of the  
thyme-scented hillside,

And at melodious work golden bright hummers  
to see  
Driving their wings in the sunbeams; through  
the rocks let me follow,  
Till I may taste the sweet drop stored in  
Hymettus away.

## TITYRUS.

Corydon, go — thou must find for thyself the  
sweets of Hymettus,  
But before thou set out, treasure this warning  
I give:  
Twain is the being of man, composed of the soul  
and the body.  
Twain is Nature herself, made up of good and  
of bad;  
And Hymettus is twain, of the bees and the  
goats the one parent,  
Both thou must take by the way, if thou dost  
wish to be all.  
Sip the sweet honey drawn by the bees from the  
heart of the flowers,  
But thee I warn — thou wilt pass through the  
rough tract of the goats. —  
Yonder comes Phoebe, the shepherdess lonely,  
still she is flouting,  
I must be off to my flock — farewell, my  
Corydon, go.

## CORYDON.

Shepherdess, hear me, now is the spring and thou  
art the flower,  
Hoary old Time with his scythe tarries to look  
at thy bloom;  
I can see him standing at rest before the young  
harvest,  
What a glow in his face ! ardor is burning his  
veins.  
Blame him not, he grows young in thy youth,  
turns red in thy rose-bud ;  
Not a word thou hast said, still thy sweet  
whisper is heard.  
Now I too have to yield, and answer thy bloom  
with my blossom,  
Come, the whole world is a flower which we  
are plucking just now.

## PHŒBE.

Shepherd, pick up thy crook from the ground, I  
pray thee, be modest ;  
Go thy way to thy herds ; look, they have need  
of thy care.

## CORYDON.

Finest droplet of sweetness is sipped from the  
earth by the flower,  
On the flower alights, sipping its treasure, the  
bee ;

From the stores of the bee sips man, of sippers  
the highest,

All the sweetness of earth he must distill into  
life.

Soil and flower and bee are a channel for foun-  
tains of nectar

Ready to gush in thy mouth ; touch now thy  
lips to the stream.

#### PHŒBE.

Modesty, sweetest of maidens, is not aware she  
is modest ;

When she knoweth herself, then she is never  
herself.

#### CORYDON.

Modesty's speech is always a silence that tells  
she is modest ;

Never declaring her own, hath she the sweetest  
of praise.

#### PHŒBE.

Never can Modesty, e'en in a dream, proclaim  
her own nature ;

With but the word she is lost, fled at the  
sound of her voice.

#### CORYDON.

Spring has now come, she covers the prostrate  
earth with caresses,

Show me the lover who yields first to the  
thrill of her lips ;  
I believe it to be this willow. Look at the  
leaflets  
Breaking out over the bark, at her soft pas-  
sionate touch,  
Row after row ; then glance at the willow-bound  
brook in the meadow,  
Far you can follow its bend, traced in the  
foliage new.  
Next in her love is this group of saplings, fair  
youths of the plantain,  
Dancing a chorus of twigs tuned to her amor-  
ous breath.  
This old oak is the last of the forest to yield to  
her rapture,  
Bare still as winter his boughs, fringed with  
dead leaves of last year.  
But even he is beginning to smile and respond to  
her kisses,  
See this outgushing bud throbbed from his  
savage hard heart.  
Heart of oak, yield thee, this is the season of soft  
Aphrodite,  
This is her land ; stout Mars threw down his  
shield at her glance.

## PHŒBE.

Nature is now a fair maiden who dresses herself  
for the marriage,

Come and look at her thus, all her old lovers  
she lets  
Into the secret of her betrothal that comes with  
the spring time,  
She will take no offense, modestly peep at her  
ways.  
Over her body she draws in her triumph a flowing  
green garment ;  
Emeralds under her touch burst from each bud  
on the bough ;  
Garlands of blossoms she winds round her bosom,  
velvety, vermeil,  
Here they are white with her hand, there they  
are blue with her eye.  
Ha ! the bright face of the bridegroom peering  
just over the mountain !  
'Tis the new sun from the skies flinging his  
gold on her path.  
Now her song she begins, her sweet passion from  
all of the tree tops,  
With her each bird on the twig chants its own  
bridal refrain.

## CORYDON.

This, sweet love, is the fairest moment of spring,  
this moment ;  
Soon it will pass on its way ; quick, let us go  
to the fields,  
Where it will tarry the longest around the new  
tops of the woodland,

Over the roll of the hills vanishing into the haze.

All the year has suddenly bloomed in this day,  
in this minute,

The whole world is a flower, fragrantly blowing just now.

Every rise of the sun hath seemed in some joy to look forward,

This is the moment it saw far in the glow of its eye.

All the days of the year have been climbing above to this summit,

Now each tick of the clock sadly must knell their decline.

But thy journey of life has now touched its most beautiful moment,

Hold it fast in thy heart — that is thy conquest of Time.

#### THE TRIO. — FINALE.

Sweet was the voice of the shepherdess, tender the word of the shepherd,

She always looked on her babe, he always looked on his spouse ;

Under the shade of a plantain she nursed her first little infant,

While the lambs lay around shutting their eyes in the sun.

Thou, young wife, art born over again in the life of thy offspring,

Motherhood too is a birth, mother thou art and  
a babe.

Mark ! each suck of the stout little lips at thy  
plenteous fountain,

Each little kick on thy heart changes thee into  
thy boy.

## *Book Second.*

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### *Hellas.*

#### 1

Each faint rustle of branches above is a Goddess'  
whisper,

Each petty murmur of brooks is a low laugh  
of the Nymphs,

And a sweet little epigram steals from the glance  
of each maiden,

Dew drops hung on each leaf are the pure tears  
of the Muse.

But the miracle is, thou too art becoming a poem  
In this clime of the Gods ; wonder, O man, at  
thyself !

## 2

Here on this spot knit together are sea, and valley,  
and mountain,

Here is the youth of this plain by the old hills  
overlooked,

Here is the joy of the senses, but mingled with  
warnings of wisdom,

Here are the flowers of Spring wreathing the  
fruits of the Fall.

Hellas, a universe thou ! so small and yet thou  
art able

Clearly to image the world, which, though it  
was, is to be.

## 3

Hellas, I look at thy body now lying down under  
my vision,

Over thy bosom I peep, heaving to mountain  
and peak;

Athens, I see thee, the head of this beautiful body  
of Hellas,

From the blue waves upraised, cushioned on  
violet beds,

Brain-born child of the brain-born daughter of  
Zeus the Olympian,

Who hath named thee her own, doubly en-  
dowed with her mind,

Fathered of father of Gods, and mothered of  
mother of wisdom ;

There is Acropolis too, which is thy battle-lit  
eye,  
Glancing afar on the sea, yet smiling on blue  
Attic hill-tops ;  
Of this Athenian eye look in the pupil so clear,  
That is the Parthenon, sunlit, reposeful, the  
Goddess' dwelling  
Out of it flashes a beam lighting the soul of  
the world.

## 4

Quarrymen seemed I to hear as they smote the  
deep rock of the Muses,  
For the pure white leaf on which to grave a  
new word ;  
Often the hammer resounded afar through the  
vale of Ilissus,  
Temples and Gods into life moved at the sound  
of the stroke.  
Over the water came echoes from Rome, en-  
feebled by distance,  
Laden with dust of the past Europe gave  
answer to Rome.  
Last came the echo of hope, unbodied it rose  
from the future,  
Crossing Atlantic tides mightily heaving be-  
tween.

## 5

To the violet summit I climbed of strong Lyca-  
bettus,

Bound are its sides with the rocks made for  
eternity's walls;  
There I picked but a weed as it struggled alone  
through the crevice,  
Raised it up to my lips, thoughtlessly strolling  
along.  
But how gracious the flavor that cunningly  
touched all the senses —  
Flavor distilled by a weed merely from Attica's  
rocks.

## 6

Mad are my eyes ! to-day they are merrily slaves  
of my fancy ;  
A Greek maiden I saw who through the ages  
had dropped ;  
She was one of the forms that danced in the  
chorus of Pindar,  
And she sang his high hymns, moving to music  
of flutes.

## 7

Merry Anacreon, many an epigram tells of thy  
days and their joyance,  
And thy epitaph too ever is written afresh ;  
Wine and Love and the Muse made thy life one  
intoxication,  
Even thy death is a feast lighting grim Hades  
with joy.  
All made thee drunk, the twitter of swallows,  
the chirp of cicadas,

Love of maiden and youth, gift of mad Bacchus  
as well.

Nature becomes a melodious banquet, reeling in  
verses,

Roses and ivy and vines twirl round thy lines  
with a laugh.

But the most maddening draught to thyself and  
to me is thy poem,

A true singer thou art, on thine own song thou  
art drunk.

## 8

Far I rambled to-day through the grove in the  
vale of Kephissus,

There in the Olives I found hidden a black-  
berry grot,

Laden with fruit was each pliant bush, yet hung  
with fresh blossoms,

Dark were the berries that shone through the  
white wreath on the stalk.

Now it is winter, yet see the full fruit alongside  
of the flower!

Ripeness of age in this clime has the fresh  
blossom of youth.

I approach the fair harvest desiring to taste the  
new flavor,

Also the fragrance to scent breathed from the  
flowering shrub.

Heigh! what a rustle of wings is flapped from  
hundreds of birdlings,

Who a festival held hidden in berries and buds.

Far through the orchard they scatter, then drop on the tree-tops;

Hark! what a melody trills out of the silvery leaves!

## 9

O the mad Attic joys now dancing aloft on the mountains!

And the gentler delights tripping through forest and stream!

Armies of happy existence move out of the trees and the fountains,

Whole new peoples spring up over the emerald floor,

Slipping into the world for a moment, then slipping out of 't,

Hark, the new song they begin suddenly over my head.

## 10

Scattered along on my journey are many old fragments of marble,

Showing a crystalline smile on the sere face of the ground;

Still they gladden the wanderer mid the dull rubbish around them,

Though they be but the chips left by some workman of old.

These were the fragments imprisoning sunny  
Ionian columns,  
Till by the chisel set free out of the fetters of  
rock ;  
These were the pieces in which was nestled the  
form of the Goddess,  
Look once more at the shell whence the great  
Pallas escaped.

## 11

Once this plain, now so rocky and thirsty, was  
full of dense foliage,  
Rich aviaries of song were all the tops of the  
trees,  
Whence a perennial runnel of music ran down  
from each leaflet,  
Nourishment sweet for the tongues lapping  
melodious dew.  
Still I can see in this soil green sprouts of many  
a sapling  
That would the grove restore where the high  
singers once lodged.

## 12

Look over Attica ! deserts of rock are her fields  
and her highlands ;  
Orphaned of warblers she seems, orphaned of  
trees for their seats ;  
But a sharp search will discover still many a little  
low bramble,

Wherein birdlings sit piping a wee tender note.  
When to-day I had found a green bush, it was  
full of young singers  
Warbling some old Attic chimes tuned to  
ancestral high strains.

## 13

Through Attic meadows I stroll; I come to a  
grove of broad poplars  
Where the shepherd breeze plays a low note on  
his pipe;  
Round the roots of the trees is running on pebbles  
the brooklet,  
Murmuring strains to the brink, fresh from the  
home of the Nymphs.  
But the tree-tops have given a refuge to sweet  
Attic singers  
That from their leafy abode throw out a  
fountain of song;  
List to the wealth that they fling on the air in  
melodious revel,  
Hundred-throated with joy in the debauch of  
their strains.

## 14

On this classical soil one cannot help being an  
augur —  
Watches the feathery flight, lists to the  
humming of wings,

That he may find out the will of the Gods and  
set it to music:

Nature is deity's hymn, folding the earth in a  
song.

## 15

Poesy is, O reader, not merely the copy of  
Nature;

Nature's voice she must win, breathing it into  
a word;

But that word has Divinity's soul in the body of  
Nature,

From whose lips you must catch inward the  
strain of the God.

## 16

Often before have I rambled through fields in the  
Spring, said the shepherd;

But the green grass-blade to me was but a blade  
of green grass;

Or, I thought it was good for a spear of dry hay  
in a bundle,

Which would nourish my flock when the bare  
winter had come.

Now to my glance, as I wander around the green  
Attic meadows,

A new being it springs suddenly up at my feet.

## 17

Poem I never could relish that babbled of Nymphs  
and the Muses;  
Lifeless they were to the eye, meaningless unto  
the soul;  
But in this soil they now rise as of old to the  
vision Hellenic,  
They each moment are born, breathing, yea,  
speaking to me.  
Seize them thou must as they spring into life in  
the trees, in the fountains;  
Set them no longer to grind, bound to the  
treadmill of verse.  
Leave them alone if thou art not able to merrily  
catch them,  
Bathing in the lone brook, singing their note  
on the hills.

## 18

Gently the rill flows over white pebbles of Pentelic  
marble,  
Into the Olives it winds vanishing under the  
leaves;  
See the clear stream with a flow like the folds of  
the Pythian priestess,  
As to the altar she goes hung on the thought of  
the God.

## 19

Winged are words, O Homer, but feathered from  
various pinions;

Some have the eagle's wing, darting adown on  
the prey ;  
Some have the buzzard's, but hark ! altogether  
the most have the screech-owl's ;  
Be the small humming-bird's mine, always he  
hums while he sips.

## 20

Winged is ever thy word, O Homer ; such is thy  
vision  
That thou beholdest it fly, sped on its way by  
the Muse ;  
Winged thy word, O bard ; and, propelled on the  
breath of thy music,  
Soars aloft with a thought tuned to the flight  
of the spheres.

## 21

Poet is he who to speech transferring the image  
of Nature,  
Therein hidden transfers also the form of the  
God.

## 22

This is Hellas, the thyme you can pluck from the  
stoniest hillside ;  
Thyme here grows from the rocks, thence all  
its fragrance it draws.

## 23

What is the highest of Nature, the noblest of  
things of the senses?

What but this body of life? said the fair Greek  
to himself.

Let it be trained until it become a mirror trans-  
parent

In whose movement you see all the fine work  
of the soul.

## 24

No, thy form was not made to be stretched on  
the cross of distortion.

But for the Grace's abode joined to Apollo's  
clear rhythm;

Still the Poet can hear, as he notes thy victorious  
movements

Hymning thy body's refrain, melody deep for  
his song.

## 25

'Tis the Barbarian's mark to behold his own  
shame in his body,

And to hide it in swathes lest it offend the  
clear eye;

But the Greek soul has purified body to motion  
of spirit

That the immortal Gods take it with joy as  
their own.

## 26

Tender verses I pluck on my path from the tip  
of each leaflet,  
From enfolding soft buds sip I the dew of the  
morn,  
Sweet little epigrams lightly I suck from the lips  
of each flowret,  
All the sweet treasure I drip into a honeycomb  
rare  
Made out of hundreds of cellules with geometric  
precision ;  
Still from the clear waxen fount gushes the  
heart of the flowers.

## 27

Slowly I climb to the top, the rest of the heights  
lie below me,  
Which, as I looked from the plain, seemed very  
lofty and great;  
Yonder I was, I reflect now, laboring joyfully up-  
ward,  
There on a stone I sat down, taking repose  
from my toil.  
Now I glance back from this seat where I rest, I  
write a short poem,  
Brave little epigram, up — quickly advance to  
the top.

## 28

Many a new-born kid you may see on the rocks  
of Hymettus,  
Dropped by the mother there suddenly touched  
with the pang  
Ushering life into light; then quickly she turns  
to her offspring  
With a fond gleam from her eye kindled by  
Nature's deep joy.  
At a draught of milk from the udder young  
knees will stiffen,  
Thousands of kids in their sport leap on the  
sides of the hills.

## 29

New Hymettian quarries of marble have lately  
been opened,  
See the laborer there cleaning the rubbish  
away  
Where was the cloister. At noontide in the calm  
shade of its ruins  
He will nap for a time ; this is its very last use.

## 30

On Hymettus thou still canst behold the remains  
of the quarries  
Which for the marble were wrought, bringing  
it out to the sun ;

Now deserted they lie, filled up with the rubbish  
of ages,

Yet beneath all the waste wait the old treasures  
for light.

Open the quarries once more now hid in the heart  
of Hymettus,

Bring out its crystalline stores, still it has  
temples and Gods.

## 31

Poesy dost thou find in thy strolls on rugged  
Hymettus?

Why, the mountain is bare, harvest it has but  
of stones.—

Yet the bee will find on these rocks the sweetest  
of honey;

Out of their caverns and creaks hives he will  
build for his stores.

## 32

We may behold the mythical world thou didst  
live in, O Homer,

From Hymettus the blue looking across toward  
Troy;

All the Gods are astir now, and, summoned to  
hold their assembly,

Rise in the sound of the sea, move in the song  
of the land;

And to me, the poor mortal, Hermes is bringing  
their message,  
Each little thought of the heart is a light waft  
of the God.

## 33

Yonder I see that I strayed as I look from the  
top of the mountain,  
Tarried too long for the flower, not long enough  
for the fruit  
Of my journey to ripen in sunshine: double my  
error;  
Still I had to stray there, if I would mount to  
this height.  
Many the lower small summits that swell over  
graceful Hymettus,  
Some with their blossoms and bees, some with  
their thistles and thorns.

## 34

In my ramble I went far astray in a gorge of  
Hymettus,  
Now I see my mistake plain as the sun on yon  
rock,  
And I wonder how I could lose the clear lines of  
this mountain,  
All of which seem to direct straight to the  
beautiful goal.  
What seems easy is hardest, what seems near is  
most distant,

Sunlit Hymettus, to-day thou art my image of life.

## 35

Two are the sides of Hymettus, O wanderer ;  
steep and ungainly  
Is the whole slope of the mount, when from  
fair Athens it turns ;  
Yet how graceful and gradual is the descent to-  
ward Athena's  
Marble abode, where she lies resting on violet  
beds.  
But deceive not thyself by the view, this way is  
more distant,  
It to the temple doth lead which the wise God-  
dess indwells.

## 36

Yes, I saw the coarse goats as they fed on the  
top of Hymettus,  
Browsing the live-long day on a mere bramble  
of thorns  
Whose toothed leaves ran out to a point in a  
truculent briar ;  
Still the goats would devour leaflets and twigs  
with the spines.  
How to live on the bramble that chokes up the  
ways of the Muses,  
The example is here — one must be changed  
to a goat.

## 37

What ! is it true that foul goats now feed on this  
honey-dewed mountain ?

Yes ; for the note of a Muse list to that sensual  
snort.

Here they too have been lodged, just where the  
high summit is highest,

And in the shadiest dell, under the pleasantest  
pine.

How do I know ? thou askest. Hymettus is  
turned to a dung-hill,

That is the sign of the goat, feculent drops  
lie around.

## 38

The whole day like a goat you may browse on  
the leaves thorn-bordered,

Which now grow on the mount where all the  
Muses once sang ;

Sprigs you may pluck by the handful in search  
of a savory morsel

Through all the cotes you may pass, there not  
a panspipe is found.

Turn then aside to the musical stream sent down  
from the ancients,

You will find the old mount full of bright  
flowers and song.

## 39

Oft have I strayed from the path, but always  
returned from my straying;

Often have I been lost till I discovered myself.  
Fiercely I stormed through the weeds, I fought  
on my path with the brambles,  
Burs I picked from my coat, thorns I pulled  
out of my flesh.

But as I wandered alone, not knowing whither I  
tended,

Flowers I plucked in the fields, fruits too I  
culled from the trees.

Labyrinthine Hymettus, one must be lost in thy  
windings,

In thy honeycomb lost, ere of thy sweetness  
he taste.

## 40

Epigrams, wake ! ye seem to have fallen asleep  
or are sleepy ;

Weave to a bower your forms over the way-  
farer's path,

As he leaps on the stones and roams through the  
dells of the mountain :

Then on Hymettus' top lay the bright wreath  
ye have wound.

## 41

What is thy thought as thou strollest through  
hollows and hills of Hymettus ?

Life is a honeycomb too, made up of millions  
of cells  
Which are called moments of Time; perchance  
they are utterly empty,  
But may with honey be filled from the sweet  
flowers of earth.  
Every minute to-day is a void little cell, by the  
Gods to thee given,  
Be now busy as bees, with a sweet deed fill the  
cell.

## 42

Now the height of Hymettus I touch, of my  
efforts the highest,  
Always before have I stopped, worn by the  
difficult way.  
From this spot I can see the whole plain stretched  
humbly below me,  
Over whose equal expanse wildly I wandered  
to-day.  
But the view that pleases me most, looking back  
on my pathway,  
Is, I see over the heights which I once reached,  
and then left.

## 43

Now I look out on the world from the top of  
sunny Hymettus;  
Far below me it lies, all its mad struggle  
unheard,

And its bounds on the farthest sea I hold in my vision ;

How does it seem? you inquire. Look in these epigrams here.

Hundreds of mirrors I place them, always returning one image;

Though the facets be small, each will reflect the full form.

## 44

Overlaid with the gold of the sun is the top of the mountain,

To those treasures I wend, shunning mad Eros the while;

There is the softest caress of the Muse, and the pipe of the shepherd,

Soothing the wound of the heart in the repose of the hills.

But I soon shall return, again I shall love, I know it;

The sole freedom I have is to be thrall of the God.

## 45

Tell me what ails thee, O friend? Art mortal, hast surely the heart-ache;

Then go with me to-day, yonder are heights in the sun;

Bathe the still-ebbing wound of thy heart in the quiet of hill-tops,

There alone thou canst be with the great  
Healer, the God.

46

Yesterday green was the mountain, but to-day it  
is hoary ;  
Snow has fallen above, covered its temples  
with grey ;  
Yesterday thou wert a youth upspringing in  
bloom to the heavens,  
Ah, to-day thou art old, gone through thy time  
at a bound.  
See how age is barely divided from youth by a  
snow-storm,  
Crushed into one wild night all of thy years are  
a dream.

47

Chill is the wind that bears me along toward  
snowy Hymettus,  
The lone shepherd now comes down from the  
mount with his flocks,  
He has put up his panpipe, snow has palsied his  
fingers,  
Flowers no longer will bloom, springing above  
the rude rock  
Into the sunlight ; every bee has fled from the  
hill-side ;  
Poesy freezes to-day ; Poet too shivers along.

## 48

Round the top of the mountain are whirling the  
flakes of the snow-storm,  
While below in the plain softly are playing  
the beams ;  
Darkly Hymettus doth muffle his head in his  
wind-woven mantle,  
Lying serene on her couch Partheuon still has  
the sun.

## 49

Æschylus saw yon sea when he spoke of its num-  
berless laughter ;  
Now its face you behold sparkling with  
millions of smiles  
Merrily racing each other in sport to the Isthmian  
race-course,  
The great games of the God still they keep up  
at his shore.  
But look deep in the water and watch its laughing  
reflection,  
There the Olympian world dimples with smiles  
in the waves.

## 50

Look at this cairn, the monument built by others  
before me  
Right on the top of the mount, far overlooking  
the vale,

Till the glancing victorious sea, whose flutter of  
wavelets  
Plays round Salamis still pæans of warriors of  
old.  
Touch with thine eye the great heart of the sea  
in the distance,  
Thou its deep beating wilt feel as if a battle  
were there.

## 51

Clear are the lines of this mountain, like to the  
forms of the sculptor,  
And transparent the air softly embracing its  
curves;  
Up here I stand, not a soul in the plain there  
below can behold me,  
Still in Greek sunshine I stand, that is my only  
reward.

## 52

Why were the sides of this mountain, when they  
were rolled into ridges,  
Fixed by the hand of the God just at their  
tenderest swell?  
Look, you will see the reason. There the broad  
folds of the ancients  
Sculptured over its slant sweep with their trail  
in the plain.

## 53

This book of epigrams, what shall I call it? A  
handful of pebbles  
Gathered in my ascent from the rough side of  
the mount.  
And that writing I scratch on all of them? That  
is my veremark;  
With some faith thou must try, if the device  
thou wilt read.

## 54

Here are my stones to the cairn upreared by my  
dear predecessors,  
Whose great names can be read, writ on the  
tablets of rock;  
On the pile I throw down my pebbles, each one  
is scribbled  
With some legend faint, visible scarce to the  
crowd.  
Still my mark on them will hereafter be always  
deciphered  
By a few climbers; to-day leave me this  
comfort at least.

## 55

Shepherds were piping and calling to-day all over  
the mountain,  
Far asunder they were, no one his fellow could  
see;

Still each heard and answered the other, in words  
far-resounding,  
Which in harmonious waves played through  
the tortuous dells.  
In my own native speech I endeavored to give  
them an answer,  
Set to the music I heard there on the pastoral  
heights.

56

See the shepherd who leans on yon bush, I  
happen to know him;  
Clothes are the skins of his flock, rude is the  
staff in his hand;  
Plain is his speech, but the word bears in it some  
image of nature,  
And if he strike up a song, clear it will flow  
from his heart.  
Ears which hear his music, eyes which pierce his  
mantle,  
Find the man within, find too the beautiful  
soul.

57

Up! the snow has fallen to-day and covered  
Hymettus,  
See how he shimmers aloft next to the clouds  
of the sky!  
Now we must go and behold him once more in  
new crystalline drapery  
That falls over his sides, like the white folds of  
the Gods.

## 58

Shaggy capote of the shepherd is snowy with  
 fleeces of cloudland,  
 There he stands mid his herd, white as the  
 sheep that he drives;  
 But just look at the goat, the black goat, to a  
 fleece now whitened,  
 Yet with a ray of the sun he will again be a  
 goat.

## 59

“ High-toned society I cannot find in your epi-  
 grams ; bless me,  
 What a vulgar set ! shepherds, and goats, and  
 yourself.”  
 Humble we are, I confess, although, if you scan  
 us more closely,  
 You will behold what is, not is pretending to  
 be.

## 60

Once I met a small bee in my walk on the top of  
 Hymettus ;  
 On a bare rock he sat, as I bent over his seat.  
 What ! is it truth or delusion ? From stones ex-  
 tractest thou honey  
 Famed of old as to-day, delicate drop of the  
 world ?  
 Friend, I hail thee ! fly not away, I gladly would  
 know thee ;

Teach me how sweetness to draw out of the  
heart of the rock.

## 61

Here the old cloister is lying, now fallen to ruin  
and romance,  
Quiet it rests in the vale where meditation once  
dwelt;  
So the cloister is passing the way of the temple  
and column,  
In it no longer is heard prayer ascending on  
high.  
But the Nymph is still here, and she will remain  
here forever,  
Laughing out of this spring, as it leaps down  
the fresh stones.

## 62

Over the fountain the layers of rock rise up in  
graceful disorder,  
Temple built by the Nymphs in a wild fanciful  
play  
For those youths whose worship was sport and  
whose sport was a worship;  
Here by the cloister it lies, just the same tem-  
ple of old.  
This is a seat of the Nymphs, and there in the  
rocks are grimaces  
Which they in mockery make mocking the  
vanishing monks.

## 63

How it may be with thee on this spot, O reader,  
 I know not,  
 But as for me I rejoice, seeing the joy of this  
 fount  
 And of these rocks still filled with the happy re-  
 minders of fable ;  
 In these ruinous walls too I rejoice — let them  
 fall.

## 64

O Pindarus, one finds in the golden strands of  
 thy network,  
 Intricate yet full of grace, all the sweet music  
 of forms —  
 Grecian youths, as they strove in the games or  
 leapt in the race course,  
 As in the contest or dance wound they fair  
 shapes to a hymn.

## 65

Fervid, O high-worded bard, is thy worship of  
 youthful Apollo,  
 God of wisdom and song blended in music to  
 one ;  
 God of all the high harmonies, both the inner and  
 outer ;  
 Let me too him revere, softly attuned to his  
 strain.

Hark ! he hath a deep power which sets the  
full soul in vibration,  
To some melody pure that is beyond our own  
selves ;  
But when the God has withdrawn his touches of  
innermost music,  
Back to the earth we fall into unresonant  
clay.

## 66

Give me thy melody, give me thy theme, both  
flowing together,  
Word is one with the thought, form is the  
same as the soul ;  
Legend transparently bears in the flow of thy  
music its moral,  
Ever the mode thou dost sing one is with what  
thou dost sing.

## 67

Theban eagle, now thou hast shown me where is  
the summit  
Of the culture of Greece, long by me sought  
with much toil ;  
Harmony is its whole name, deep-woven through  
cunningest measures,  
All of whose strands intertwine into one gar-  
ment of song.

## 68

Still to-day you can see the white folds of the antique peplos,  
As they fall down the limbs, rounded and full,  
of the maid;  
And the man you behold as he strides in white tunic of linen,  
Showing the shapely turns which are our body's own song.  
Look at yon form, and know why marble was taken by sculpture  
To express the high deed done by the Great Man or God.

## 69

Even in Hellas the good and the bad oft balance each other;  
Love I the old in the new, hate I the new in the old.  
Pleasant the song of the larks as they trill in the old Attic meadows,  
Hateful the sound of the gun, modern intruder in Greece.  
Off fly the larks, on the air float shreds of melodies ancient,  
Clear ancestral refrains, sung every day in this field.  
Over my head in a strife with the breeze is whizzing the bullet,

Gun and powder and ball, why do you ravage  
this air?  
Your sharp music I know the chiefest note of  
our era,  
Still I shall follow the larks back from the new  
to the old.

## 70

Wings I attach in the sun to my words, bright  
butterfly flappers,  
That to each flower they flit over the slant of  
the mount;  
Often not more do they bear on their breath  
than a pin-point of honey;  
Reader, out of the word thou the sweet drop  
must express.

## 71

Look! on this side Parthenon lies, on that side  
Hymettus,  
If thou canst hear with the eye, both of them  
chime to one note;  
The clear temple doth echo along all the lines of  
the mountain,  
And the mountain of stone throbs into temples  
unbuilt.

## 72

Helius leans now before me upon the round ridge  
of Hymettus,

Just for a moment he rests ere he mount up in  
the skies.

Why doth he gaze so intently across to yon hil-  
lock behind me?

There the Parthenon lies lit to a blaze in his  
glance.

Golden the bridge that he builds in the air from  
summit to temple,

Over the radiant span flit all the forms of the  
Gods.

Under this bridge of his beams I walk in the  
shade of the valley,

Slowly the bright structure breaks, now it doth  
fall round my head.

## 73

Round this mountain encircles the day, the sea-  
son, the lifetime;

Butterfly, bee, and man act out their deed on  
its breast.

Of its sweetness thou mayest be able to suck up  
a mouthful,

If thou a butterfly art, seeking the food of a  
day.

But if truly a bee thou art, thou wilt gather a  
hiveful,

Or a lifeful thou wilt, if thou art truly a  
man.

## 74

Satirist Hornet his poison don't bear in his  
tongue nor his forehead,  
Nature has hinted her mind by the mere place  
of his sting.

## 75

Hornets are reared on Hymettus, I saw the yel-  
low-ringed body,  
Poison will poison distill from the pure heart  
of the flower.  
In my wrath I struck with my hat at the daring  
intruder;  
This was the voice: Have a care lest thou a  
hornet be too.

## 76

Cast an ocean of brine on one little beam of  
Apollo,  
Still it will glow as before, dance on the en-  
vious surge;  
Such is merit, O friend. Though calumny  
darken its lustre.  
It will not be put out, even will beam on the  
foe.

## 77

Yonder is Athens, it seemeth as if from this  
height I can touch it;  
Boldly I walk down the hill when a deep gorge  
cuts me off;

Painfully then I return and try from the top a  
new pathway,  
Till I by brambles am stopped ever in view of  
the town.  
Now I go back and spy out the stores of Hymet-  
tus before me,  
Hearing its song on my way, soon I to Athens  
am come.

## 78

This is the Pnyx, you say, whence spoke the  
great orator Attic,  
Still may be heard from these stones eloquent  
echoes of old ;  
This broad platform hewn from the rock is a  
voice adamantine  
That through the ages resounds warning the  
races of men.  
Gone are the dwellings and temples and men that  
crowded this summit,  
But the voice has remained — hark ! it is speak-  
ing to-day.

## 79

Only behold this stone of the Pnyx, altogether  
the greatest,  
Though the others are large, larger than else-  
where, you think.  
Here it rests in the wall, it was raised by the  
hand of a Titan,

To outlast all the strokes in the great fall of a world.

Let us call it Demosthenes, rock of perdurable grandeur,

Orator now on his stand, uttering still his great word.

80

Mid these ruins, O wanderer, this should be thy first lesson,

To be able to hear speech without lips, without words;

Study the language of stones, put together their old broken story,

Hear their destroyer speak too, smiting them down in his wrath.

81

Athens, I fear thee; thou wert the favorite haunt of the virgin,

Who has given thee name, who thy chief temple indwelt;

Stern and severe is thy glance, O Pallas, thou maid of cool reason,

Knowledge and art are thy gifts, scorning the light play of Love.

Venus is hateful to thee, and all the lorn lover's caprices,

This I must not forget, as I thy favor implore.

Still on this mountain you often can hear the soft trill of panspipe,

Notes of it rise on the air tuning the slope to  
its strain,  
One they are with the sunshine over the tran-  
quilest ridges,  
One with the hum of the bee, one with the  
beat of the heart.

## 82

The cicada, long famous for music, I saw on a  
grass-blade,  
He was the last of his race fallen on days of  
decline;  
The green freshness of Spring had changed to  
the dullness of Autumn,  
Scarce could he balance his wings, and he no  
longer could sing.  
But his shape he retained, and all of his ancient  
armor,  
A tall helmet he wore mounted by double high  
crests;  
Long was the fall of his robe which covered his  
tapering body,  
Draping a hint of the Gods: graceful were  
bended his limbs.  
Here in view of the city, whose eye is the fane  
of Athena,  
Antique shadows he casts, dim like the old in  
the new.  
But, O Anacreon, let him now sing as he sang  
for thy measures,

A new life he will have, echoing notes of thy  
lyre.

83

Ah, discordant the sound I now hear in a dale of  
Hymettus !

'Tis the Byzantine twang that from yon chapel  
doth come.

That is surely the sound which killed old Pan in  
this mountain,

And it would any God, daily to hear such a  
snarl.

84

Many a sound is hateful — the grating of hinges  
in dungeons,

And the clanking of chains, also the human  
shrill screech ;

But the clanking, the grating, the screeching is  
sweetest of music

To the screed of the priest mid the Greek hills  
on a morn.

85

Who were my visitors as I reposed on the hill  
of Colonus ?

Butterflies, birds and bees came with their  
message of joy.

But here cometh a blind old man who is led by a  
maiden.

What does he say ? What she ? Look in the  
poet of old.

Œdipus, thou art the man who always appears  
to the stranger,  
Here thou didst wander in life, here thou wert  
ta'en to the Gods.

## 86

Still you may note the olive and grape, the  
plantain and cypress,  
Through the Athenian vale, roaming the river  
along;  
Still at noon you may see old Cephissus rise  
out his stream-bed,  
Secretly water the trees that are enwreathing  
his banks ;  
And the gracefullest nymphs are still frisking  
amid yonder thicket,  
Now from this height you may watch all of  
their frolicsome sport.

## 87

Sophocles, this was thy hill on whose summit  
transpired the wonders  
Which thou didst see in old age, but with a  
vision beyond.  
Round the hill is woven a garland of silvery  
olives,  
Playing to-day in the breeze, pretty reminders  
of song.  
Peering amid the grey foliage gleams the bare  
top of Colonus,

Like a poetical brow, aged, though fresh in its joy.

Gone are thy temples and shrines, O hillock;  
gone are thy Gods too,  
Still thou by Nature art crowned with the green wreath of the bard.

## 88

What did you see, O stranger, to-day on the hill of the Muses,  
Seeking the joyous old haunts where the sweet Sisters once dwelt? —  
Goats, I saw nothing but goats that were browsing the thyme of the hill-slopes,  
And there was nothing beside, which could be seen with the eye.  
As I sat and watched their ungraceful and dirty caprices,  
Soon the dauber I felt there of becoming a goat.

## 89

Long I sought on that hill for a trace of some musical shepherd,  
Tuning his pipe in the sun to the soft trill of his heart;  
Flocks I sought for calmly reposing in patches of sunshine,  
Maidens I looked for in vain, sporting with lambs on the rocks.

All the hill-side was bare, not a bush, not a  
 flower or thyme-stalk,  
 Whose mild fragrance was once sweetly dis-  
 till'd into verse.  
 Pan is dead, the shepherd and shepherdess thence  
 have vanished,  
 Sheep are now left to themselves till they be  
 shorn for their fleece.

## 90

From the Nine Sisters this hill is named ; they  
 dwelt on its summit,  
 And from the height they attuned all the hori-  
 zon around  
 To their music; unto its cadences rose up the  
 temples,  
 Choruses fair tripped forth, swaying the body  
 to song ;  
 The high forms of the Gods and Goddesses step-  
 ped out of marble,  
 Speech was an ecstasy sweet, flowing to meas-  
 ures of time ;  
 All the deeds of the doers, all the words of the  
 speakers  
 Were one strain of the Muse singing in Athens  
 of old.

## 91

Up, companion, climb to the top of the hill of  
 the Muses,

Thence you will note in the plain city and  
temple and sea;  
And if you look long enough, you will witness  
the birth of Athena  
Rising up with her town cast in the mold of  
her brain.

## 92

From this top where we lie, let us view yon  
theater's ruin,  
Carefully build it anew, which all the Muses  
once built,  
When they had on this hill their temple of far-  
gancing glory,  
And inspired the voice which is still heard in  
those walls.  
Piece together their fragments, list to the notes  
that they echo,  
You will hear a vast rhythm setting to music  
the world.

## 93

Athens, many thy violet hills, and all of them  
sacred!  
Each one, however small, raises its head to the  
skies  
High as Olympus; take, O friend, the next path  
of the ascent;  
It will lead to the top where is the home of a  
God.

## 94

O the shy Muses, I wonder if they to my love  
give requital !

Many adorers they have, few are invited to  
stay ;

Some get a glance or a smile, and some get a  
word from their heart-depths,

But the most are dismissed — suitors who loiter  
outside.

Scarce in a century will the coy Muse fall in love  
with a mortal,

Breathing her soul into his, making one pas-  
sionate life

That must break into song and tune all the world  
to its keynote,

When we see Nature herself joining her voice  
to the choir.

Could I be sure I were loved as much as I love  
ye, O Sisters !

Epigrams never would cease welling up into  
the day.

Give me the meed of my love back, be thou a  
Muse or maiden,

Give the reciprocal kiss, lips are made two to  
be one.

## 95

Parthenon, mid thy deep joy thou showest a still  
deeper sorrow,

Fate has smitten thee too, as it smote heroes  
of old.

Yes, I catch thy sweet smile which gladdens the sea and the valley,  
But I behold, too, the wound which has been struck in thy side.  
Thou like OEdipus, Hercules, thou the Greek temple, art tragic,  
Ruin heroic thou art, beautiful just in thy fall.  
O the eternal delight that sings out thy fragments of marble !  
O the eternal pain from the pierced heart of thy stones !

## 96

Here, at thy shrine, O Pan, near the stream of little Ilissus,  
Gratefully to thee I give all of the wanderer's arms:  
Namely, this faithful staff which stoutly supported my footsteps  
Where are the mountain haunts trod by the shepherd alone;  
And these shoes too I offer, now torn by the rocks of the hillside  
As I sought thy retreat mid the deep forest and glen.  
By their aid and by thine, O Pan, I have ended my journey,  
Take now the signs of my art, grant me, I pray thee, repose.

Maid of Athens.

In the bed of Ilissus is lying Calirhoe limpid,  
Heaving her watery breast still to the God of  
the stream ;  
Thither I wander to hear from the Nymph her  
melodies ancient,  
Fain would I catch her sweet note sung to the  
fablers of old.  
As I sat on a stone and looked at the gush of the  
fountain,  
Came with Junonian tread maiden of figure  
antique ;  
White was the ripple of folds as they flowed  
down the lines of her body,  
Broken to waves at each step just as she  
bended the knee.  
She was bearing an amphora ancient of grace-  
fulest model,

Wherein to pour the fresh drink throbbed from  
the heart of the earth ;  
With the cup in her hand she was dipping it out  
of the fountain,  
Filling the jar at her side with a bright sparkle  
of pearls ;  
To me she handed a draught from the flood of  
Calirhoe's vintage,  
While the wealth of her eyes, spendthrift, she  
poured on the ground.  
Nor would she look at me even while daintily  
doing me service,  
Ever she kept at her work busily whirling the  
cup ;  
How I longed to speak but a word — she forbade  
me in silence,  
Still I read what she said written in movement  
and form.  
Forward she leaned her lithe body that turned  
to the outline of Graces,  
High she swung her white arm bared to the  
shoulder of dress,  
Cupful she whirled after cupful into the mouth  
of the vessel,  
While her melodious breath uttered a song to  
the rhythm,  
As it softly was flowing from motion of hand  
and of body,  
So that attuned to one note seemed both her  
form and her lips.

O the beautiful concord when song is a bodily movement,  
And the movement a song hymned from the heart in each act !  
See now the dead earthen amphora wet with Callirrhoe's finger !  
Shapes spring out of its clay born at a touch of her hand ;  
What was a dull, burnt side of a jar, quite lifeless and vacant,  
Now with action is filled, action of figures divine ;  
Pallas I see rise up at her city, in bearing majestic,  
To a mortal she speaks, son of Laertes I deem.  
Then is pictured a maid, Nausicaa, near to a fountain,  
To her Ulysses appears, wanderer mighty of old,  
And he prays her to lead him the way to the wonderful city,  
Home of the beautiful forms, work too itself of the Gods.  
Far he has come on his journey from mythical lands by the sunset,  
Seeking his earliest hearth, where once his spirit was born ;  
“ Maiden,” I cried, “ Oh stay till I read what is told in that picture,

It is speaking to me, telling the word of my fate.

I must know what it says, must spell its oracular letters

That have been made by the strokes moved from the hand of a God.

List ! all its persons I hear, they address me as an acquaintance ;

To their group I belong, though I stand out in the air.

They have come to me here by the side of Calirhoe's mirror,

Thou art their guide to this spot, answer them now in thy speech !'

Not a word she said in reply, yet in motion responsive

Softly she uttered her heart taking the jar in her arms.

Look, the maiden has raised to her head that amphora ancient,

There it stands a high crown, wreathed with clear shapes of old Time ;

She, with life in her movement, is giving her life to its figures,

She is one of them there, though she be here too to-day.

See the old and the new now vanishing into each other,

Interplaying their forms down from Olympus to Earth,

And from the Earth to Olympus again, in the sport  
of their beauty,

Her they are giving their grace, them she is  
giving her breath.

Sketched on the air she is moving both into and  
out of that picture,

Dropped from the outlines of art into the  
movement of life.

Who can distinguish which is the modern, which  
is the ancient?

Which is the person of stone? Which is the  
being with breath?

Is it the draught of thy stream that cunningly  
changes my vision?

Or thy mirror perchance calmly reflecting a  
world?

Such are the forms that rise in thy fountain,  
Calirrhoe limpid,

Thy clear waters still show all the old shapes  
of the bard,

And transfigure them into the youngest look of  
the living,

See! I am thirsty again! Give me a drink of  
thy spring.

Hymn to Pallas.

Pallas, O Pallas of Athens, I stroll through thy  
beautiful temple,  
Which has been built in this land doubly by  
Nature and Art,  
Fair white Parthenon yonder is not thy sole  
structure, O Goddess,  
Attica all is thy house, reared to the upper-  
most hills.  
See ! this Athenian landscape is ever a glorious  
poem,  
Which from each spot you can read all the long  
day in your walk.  
Radiant verses are gleaming like falchions aloft on  
the summits,  
Mighty heroical lines lighten through opaline  
skies,  
Heaving hexameters roll from the rise and the  
fall of the sea swell,

Tender love epigrams lisp cadences low in between.

Plain and mountain and sea are a garland of splendor majestic,

Circling the head of old Time laid in fair Attica's lap;

Foliage, herd, and ship make a line of a musical measure

Moving with harmonies sweet into one cast of the eye.

O the transfusion of sound ! the transfiguration of vision !

Every object of sense flashes to letters of light ;  
Brightest of scripture is writ on the earth with a pencil of sunbeams,

And the white folds of the clouds drop down unrolling a scroll ;

Many a line of old Homer is cut on the burnished horizon,

Words of the Muse built of stars nightly you read in the sky,

Strains of high singers flow still from the liquid Ionian heavens,

Out of each fountain are heard songs set with fancies of old,

Weeds and thorns and brambles are hung with emeralds precious,

Pebbles begin underfoot suddenly turning to pearls ;

Wisdom, the grave old sage, is diamonded over  
and over

As he walks through the grove, bearing the  
thought of the world.

Ancient Pentelicus yonder is speaking a word to  
the sculptor,

Rising to statue from stone, filling the dome  
of the sky;

Happy Hymettus transfuses to song all the dew  
of his honey,

As he sweeps to the plain from the clear home  
of the Gods.

Yet this Nature is but the outermost garb of the  
poem,

Which the body doth grace hinting the glories  
within,

Nobly suggesting the soul in the refluent folds of  
green drapery,

As it flowing through vales rolls to the tops of  
the hills.

Only look up; you will see, wherever you are,  
the fair temple

Which in the center is placed, raying out  
streams from its height:

Fountain perennial, welling above an Athenian  
hillock,

Thence overflowing Greek hills into the stream  
of the world;

Waves it is sending of translucent smiles in  
eternal processions,

Thousands of years it has filled all of this  
plain with its joy  
Up to the mountainous rim that lies on the earth  
like a garland,  
And embosoms the fane in a long happy  
caress.  
Cincture of pillars by distance becomes a gay  
zone of Greek maidens,  
Festively dressed in white folds, reaching each  
other the hand.  
See the fair chorus of columns now dancing  
around on the summit,  
The full joy of the feast flows to the ends of  
the plain,  
Speaking afar to the wayfarer lonely, evangels  
of beauty,  
Moving to measures of song under melodious  
skies.  
Thither, O wanderer, haste from the vale, from  
the mountain most distant,  
Haste on the wings of the ship over the  
islanded seas,  
Aught is reaching for thee far out of the heart  
of the temple,  
Fair as the youth of the world, wise as the old  
age of Time,  
Drawing thee up the Acropolis bound in fleet  
fetters of sunbeams,  
Till thou art set on its top from the wide  
world's other side;

Pass now into the temple, thou wilt behold the  
high Goddess,  
Where she sits on her throne, seen by her  
worshiper true;  
She will show thee her beauty, she will tell thee  
her wisdom,  
She is the landscape's heart, heart of the poem  
is she.



## NOTE.

It has seemed to me that a little note appended to the present book and telling a few facts about it, would be welcome to those readers who are most interested in it and in the series of works of which it forms a part.

The first fact which I would like to make known is that the book, at the date of the present writing (April, 1892), is about fourteen years from the period of its origin. It began to live in me and to start into expression during the spring of 1878, which I passed at Rome, viewing palaces, ruins, statues, and all the remains of antiquity, even down to small fragments of ancient marble. The old world had received from Time a blow that had shivered it to pieces, still these pieces would come together for the patient inquirer, and deliver with distinctness their message. Every day would bring some new utterance, broken perchance, yet suggesting, if not completely voicing, the antique spirit.

It was for me a time of supreme happiness, of reconstruction within and without — a Roman spring in the soul. I was driven off by the hot weather to the north, but in the fall I returned, and saw again with delight my ancient acquaintances.

But the first intoxication of joy had begun to wane, I could not help feeling that there was something else behind and beyond Rome, especially antique Rome, as we still see it to-day. Looked into more closely, all the Roman stones — temples, statues, reliefs, even the triumphal arches and the Coliseum — were pointing to another land and people as their origin. Many works of antiquity very plainly spoke of captivity and servitude. The Roman conqueror subjected not

merely the Greek State, but Greek Art, which thus became a slave in Rome. Hence a reaction came over me, and with it an intense longing to go back, or, better, to go forward, to Hellas. The necessity was strong, indeed imperative, and so again I started toward the rising sun.

From these two experiences the reader will derive the two portions of the present book, *Ecce Roma* and *Epigrammatic Voyage*—the stay at Rome and the transition to Hellas.

Such is, in general, the origin of these utterances in verse. They began to spring up when I touched classic soil; they moved of themselves into their measure without any conscious violence on my part; the view of nature, the sight of the objects, the voice of the old world still speaking in monuments and in language were the first instigators, and must bear the chief blame. Such a deed I had not thought of beforehand; I had never tried a classical meter till land, sea, mountain and sky gave the beat which could then be heard vibrating through all ancient art and literature.

Still, I ought to add that not all of these poems (there are nearly two hundred and fifty, short and long) were finished or even written down on classical soil. For years after my return home the mood would come back at intervals, and would insist upon expression in the present metrical form, a very solitary note in English song. At such times whatever was old, was often touched up afresh, and even new, hitherto unconscious phases of the Greco-Roman journey would shoot into some unexpected image or thought. As late as two years ago, the antique mood revived with no little tyranny, and for a while drove out every other kind of work, especially that which had to do with the present. So the old road must be traveled over again, along which fresh flowers are always blooming. This book, accordingly, is made up of many journeys into classic lands, yet is but one journey; each time has left its trace upon the poems, which ought thereby not to lose but to reach their unity and completeness.

But life is short and the traveler at last must rest at his inn. The period has arrived when the present book must be closed and gotten rid of by its author, who has finally to send forth the child of his brain with a hope in his heart and a blessing on his lips. It is to take its place in the series of works and of long-continued attempts which have sought to regain the ancient Hellenic inheritance, and to transmit the same to our Western world. Classical studies seem just at the present to be passing through an eclipse. But in some form the spirit of that antique life must be recovered and renewed, being an integral element in the development of man from barbarism to culture, and remaining still to-day the most beautiful manifestation that has yet appeared on our planet, since it is just the manifestation of beauty.

The immediate view of nature and antiquity in Greece and Italy of to-day—the climate, the landscape, the monuments, the works of art—called forth primarily what is here written. Still there were certain literary influences and associations, ancient and modern, which played into the mood, and which I, looking back through all these years, can discern with some degree of clearness. The three chief ones I shall point out to my reader, who may possibly desire at some time to make an excursion on the same road.

1. The first of these literary influences both in time and degree was the Greek Anthology. I had never looked into this vast collection of verses which image Hellenic life for more than a thousand years in its most subtle aspects, till I reached Rome, where some allusion or quotation led me to get the small pocket edition of Tauchnitz, which then became my handbook and guide to the ancient world, nor is it wholly laid aside yet. In all my wanderings through Italy and Greece it was my chosen companion, whom I would especially recommend to my successors as the most delightful and best informed *cicerone* in Heathendom.

Very naturally there was a strong desire to make

the epigrams of the Anthology speak my mother-tongue and yet have them retain their Greek mood and drapery. The first and the indispensable requisite was that they should keep as far as possible their ancient meter. The usual English translations of the Greek epigram were iambic, in rhymed couplets or quatrains. I can truly say, I could not endure them. Even when they were faithful to the sense and poetic in language, the classic fragrance and form were all gone, for me at least. On the soil of England or America they will have to be tolerated, for that tremendous all-devouring Anglo-Saxon individuality which threatens to swallow the whole world, asserts itself also in versification and is inclined to permit only its own to be. German translations of Greek poetry, and specially of the Anthology, are far more sympathetic on the whole, though often rough and formal.

Hence arose the attempt to preserve in English the metrical form of the Greek epigram, as far as a language using accent instead of quantity would permit. Any other kind of verse will not answer, whatever be thought of the present attempt. "English ears are not used to this measure" it is said; English ears will yet have to become used to it, and let Classic numbers live in the English tongue. So much by way of prophecy, which has as yet, be it observed, no fixed date of fulfillment.

This book, however, is not a translation, nor is it an imitation or even reproduction simply. It narrates my own thoughts and experiences; it is as modern as I am, in spite of its antique form; it emphatically belongs to the present, and, whatever be its merit or want of merit, it could have been written only by a man belonging to the last half of the 19th century. An author has to put his own time and his own personality into his work. To try to write a Greek tragedy or a Latin ode just as Sophocles or Horace would have written it, is, I hold, a puerile business, and is, besides, quite impossible. Still antique forms

may be employed, but the matter, the content must be modern. In the old the new must appear all the brighter and truer for its vase. Of this complete interfusion and happy marriage between the antique and modern in poetry there is a supreme example, which the reader will note as the second literary influence observable in the present book.

2. This is Goethe. Of all the men of Teutonic blood who have visited Italy, he is the one who has shown the most feeling for the old world and greatest mastery over its form of expression, yet without losing himself in mere classical imitation. In his *Iphigenia*, in his *Roman Elegies*, and in his *Epigrams* after the Greek manner, he employs the antique form, yet it is alive, it belongs to the present also; he shows himself the most ancient as well as the most modern man, the truly universal poet.

Goethe is, therefore, the genius who has made the antique live again, and has thus surpassed antiquity itself. Not, however, by simply going back to the old ages does he accomplish this, but by living wholly in his own age. Sometimes he is called an old pagan; such he is, but he is also a youth of to-day, full of the pulse-beat of his time, even in his classical transformations. All great poets have the same trait; they are the first and the last, a kind of Alpha and Omega of human spirit.

3. Another influence was that of the Latin elegiac poets. Greece stirred up even the old practical Roman to verse-making, not naturally his vocation. I was particularly attracted to Propertius, who has given a Greco-Roman setting of Art and Mythology to his love for Cynthia, and who undoubtedly influenced Goethe.

Still I shall have to confess that the Latin poets do not mean much to me poetically. They had to transfuse the elusive Hellenic spirit into an idiom cognate to Greek indeed, but in some respects harder to break into a supple instrument of poetic freedom than German or English. The imitation and formalism one always feels in Latin poetry, even when it is subtle

and elegant. For me Goethe stands nearer the heart of the Hellenic world than any Roman poet, and utters it in a more vital way. Still, in modern Rome the old heathen poets of Rome ought to be read and understood anew.

All these different literary utterances, however, the Greek, the Roman, the German, are but transformations of one and the same thing, that which is called the antique spirit, though it is quite as modern as it is ancient. They all strike one key-note at bottom, whatever be the place, time or tongue. Moreover the same key-note can be heard to-day in classic lands by the sympathetic ear attuned to nature and art, which must be the fountain-head of any genuine poetic expression. Not the written word of the past but that which lies behind the written word and creates it, is the mighty demiurge who is always transforming himself into new shapes and whose re-incarnations in Time, by means of the letter set down in writing, give us what we call Literature.

To the above explanatory remarks I may add that *Delphic Days*, though finished long before the present book with its two parts, properly follows it and constitutes the third and final part of this classical journey.







